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THE TIMES

No. 65,260

SATURDAY MAY 6 1995

The Queen leads VE tributes

By ALAN HAMILTON

THE Queen yesterday launched a momentous weekend of VE-Day commemorations when she led the nation in a very British thanksgiving for the end of the Second World War.

Surrounded by all the panoply and flummery that the three estates of the realm can muster, the monarch attended Westminster Hall to receive loyal addresses from both her Houses of Parliament, and to reply with a speech of tribute and memory. The former

ATIS girl, to this day a dab hand with a dirty spark plug, spoke with the authority born of personal experience. "The years of the Second World War formed my youth," the Queen told a packed hall of 2,000 peers, commoners, their families and 250 veterans.

"I remember my father and mother
Continued on page 2, col 5



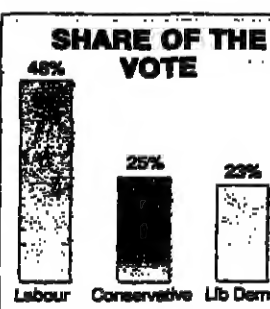
Craig Morgan, 8, left, and Rupert Grint, 6, enter into the VE-Day spirit yesterday by dressing up for a day of wartime commemoration at St Joseph's primary school, Hertford

Battered Tories in loan-rate gamble

By PHILIP WEBSTER
POLITICAL EDITOR

JOHN MAJOR and Kenneth Clarke gambled yesterday in the wake of the Tories' local election disaster by confounding all expectations that they would raise interest rates.

With Conservative MPs in a state of shell-shock after results that surpassed their worst fears, the Chancellor surprised the City by deciding to leave interest rates at 6.75 per cent. It was a move aimed at keeping the uncertain recovery on course and stemming the Government's still-deepening unpopularity. The decision was seen last night as an immediate response by the Government to the worries of Middle England, a substantial contributory factor to the electoral "meltdown" on Thursday night. But it flew in the face of predictions from the City that he would increase rates to counter the inflation-



Defeated Tories blame Cabinet

A Times survey of 227 Tory councillors defeated in Thursday's elections shows that while most blame the poor performance on an ineffective Cabinet, they also feel that the party should not risk another bruising battle for Number 10.

As the Tory high command and Cabinet rallied behind him after a night of catastrophe, the Prime Minister defiantly pledged to take the Conservatives into the next election and to fight for his beliefs.

A triumphant Tony Blair, whose party secured a record 48 per cent of the vote, said the results "unlocked the door to Downing Street", and were a huge vote of confidence for new-look Labour. His party gained 1,848 seats and the Liberal Democrats, pleased to have made gains in spite of the Labour advance, secured an extra 483 seats. The Tories lost some 2,066 seats, fulfilling the most pessimistic predictions.

Mr Major, however, declared that he would soldier on. "I have never run away from a difficulty in my life, and I don't intend to do so now."

Even so, Mr Major's future was the subject of most MPs' minds as they left for a long and what many admitted would be a dismal weekend in their constituencies, facing the wrath of party workers and deposed councillors, many of them suddenly out of office after a lifetime's work in local government.

Reports and results, pages 9 and 11
Peter Riddell, page 10
Simon Jenkins, page 20
Leading article and Letters, page 21

Sex attacker dumps girl, 5

A girl aged five was abducted, sexually assaulted and dumped 40 miles from her home almost four hours later.

The girl was found in a car in Newcastle upon Tyne on Thursday evening and there was an extensive police search. She was found wandering the streets of Darlington by a taxi driver just after midnight.

She was wearing just an anorak and white shoes and socks. Page 5

Chirac alerts voters to Jospin 'dangers'

FROM CHARLES BREMNER IN PARIS

THE French presidential campaign closed last night after a last-minute push by Jacques Chirac to warn potential abstainers that they could be helping the election of Lionel Jospin to the Elysée Palace.

With the gap narrowing to only a couple of percentage points, according to some private polls, a worried M Chirac tried to alert the country to what he called the "danger" of M Jospin winning the race. Failure to turn out tomorrow could put another Socialist in the Elysée for another seven years, he said. The appeal was clearly aimed at wooing voters who chose Jean-Marie Le Pen, the extremist right-wing candidate in the first round. M Le Pen has urged the electorate to vote for neither candidate. The behaviour of the 4.6 million who chose him is likely to hold the key to the Elysée.

M Chirac has also shifted his line on Europe over the past two days, promising to hold a referendum on further

union in another pitch for the sympathies of the anti-Maastricht Right. His shift has attracted heavy fire from the Socialist camp, with M Jospin questioning his stability. The polls this week have shown that about 20 per cent of Le Pen voters could pick M Jospin and about 45 per cent could go for M Chirac, with the remainder abstaining.

Venomous female, page 18

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INSIDE



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Free family entry to English Heritage properties. Details and today's token page 39

PLUS Protection Insurance: your questions answered Weekend Money, page 29

City punishes the Chancellor

By JANET BUSH
ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

THE pound slumped to a record low yesterday as the City punished the Chancellor for what was viewed as a politically inspired decision not to raise interest rates.

The financial markets, which had expected rates to be raised by 0.5 per cent, accused Kenneth Clarke of compro-

promising the fight against inflation because of the Tories' dreadful election showing. There was also suspicion that he had defied advice from the Bank of England.

But some City voices also praised the Chancellor for having the courage to act against expectations. They endorsed what he called a "finely balanced" judgement that a

rate rise was not needed when the economy was slowing. The majority view, however, was deeply critical. The markets speculated that Mr Clarke's record of being tough on inflation had given away to a temptation to cut and run and win the next election at the cost of economic stability.

Thrills and spills, page 26

Smogbound Bexley tops the pollution table

By NICK NUTTALL
ENVIRONMENT CORRESPONDENT
AND MARIANNE CURPHY

THE outer London suburb of Bexley became Britain's smog capital yesterday as the hot sunny weather and congested roads sent pollution levels soaring across the country.

Bexley, which has a population of 217,000 and lies 12 miles southeast of central London, recorded 255 parts per billion of sulphur dioxide — double the government safety limit. Belfast

Sheffield and much of London also recorded dangerously high levels of a cocktail of hazardous gases emitted mainly from vehicles.

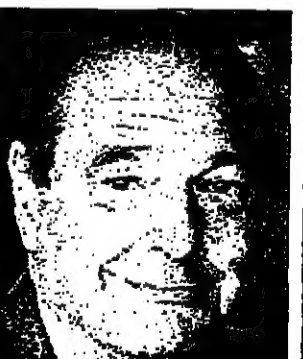
Drifting air pollution from the cities split into the countryside, where it combined with the sunshine to form ground-level ozone. In places such as North Yorkshire and East Anglia ozone levels reached 103 parts per billion (ppb): international guidelines rule that 60ppb is "very unhealthy".

The Environment Department predicted that the smog would continue to

blanket much of the country today. There are fears that levels could be even higher if many holidaymakers and VE-Day revellers take to their cars. "We have a Bank Holiday weekend, and this could contribute to a further decline in air quality," Mary Stevens, of the National Society for Clean Air, said.

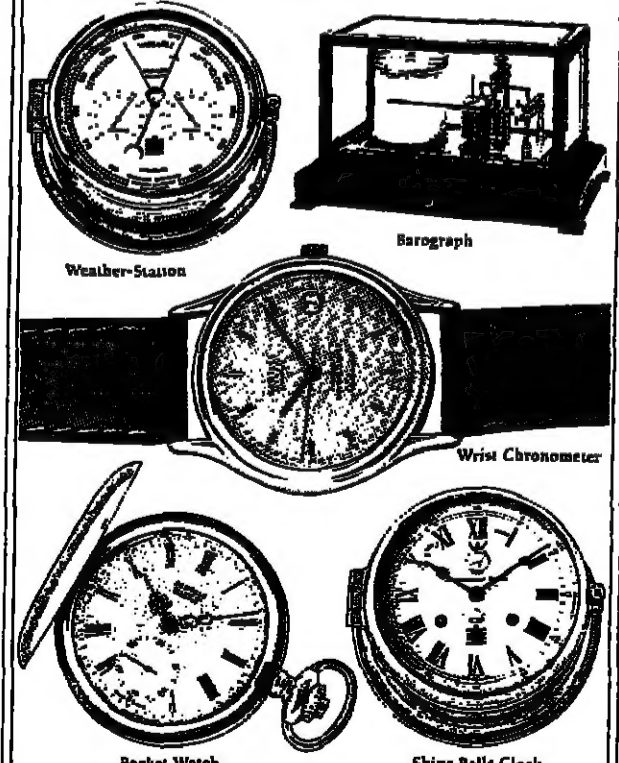
As hot, tired drivers, sweltering in temperatures of over 27C, queued on the holiday routes out of the main cities, Robert Atkins, Minister of State, Environment, urged people last night

to curb their car journeys and to travel only if necessary. "The warm, sunny weather is expected to continue over the weekend, and the poor air quality seems also likely to persist," he said. "There is no reason why people should not get out and enjoy the Bank Holiday weather, but it is important that all drivers should drive responsibly in the circumstances."



Chirac appealing to Le Pen supporters

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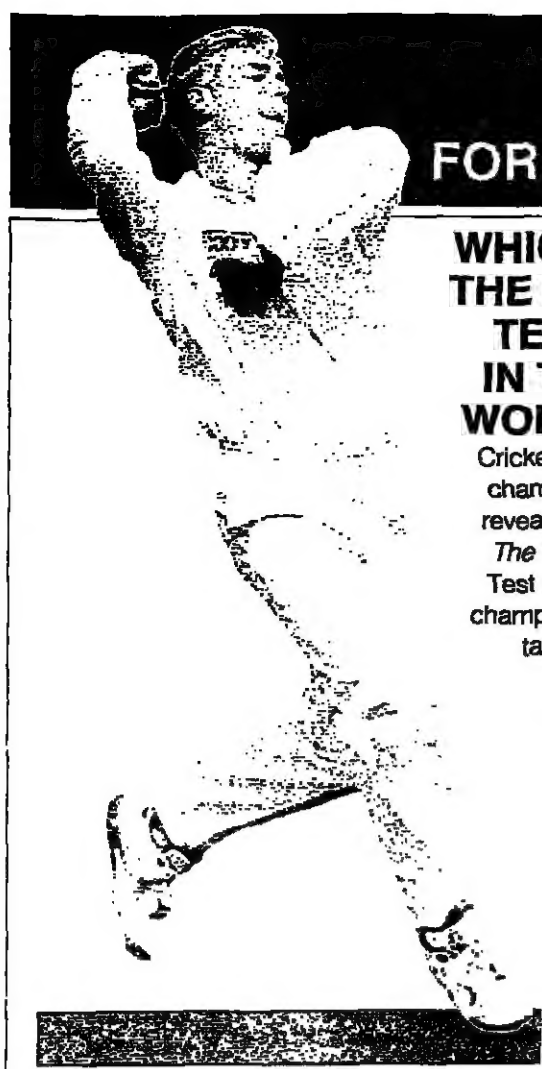
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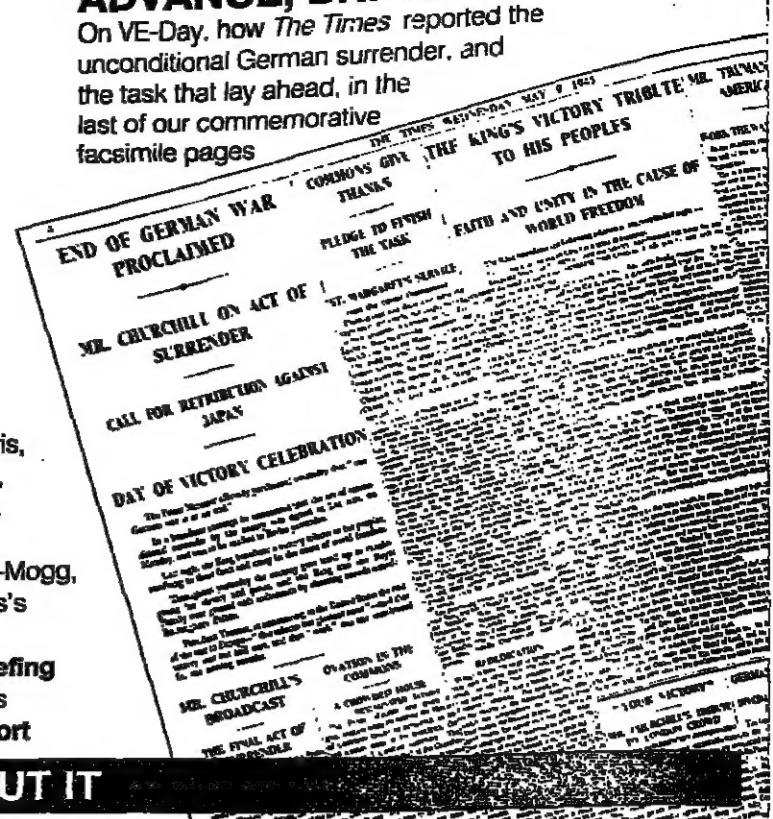


PLUS:

Matthew Parris,
Libby Purves,
Peter Riddell,
Lynne Truss,
William Rees-Mogg,
Nigel Hawkes's
weekly
Science Briefing
and 14 pages
of Times Sport

ADVANCE, BRITANNIA

On VE-Day, how The Times reported the
unconditional German surrender, and
the task that lay ahead, in the
last of our commemorative
facsimile pages



THE TIMES AT 10p - YOU CAN'T AFFORD TO BE WITHOUT IT

Shepherd's first hit squad sent into opt-out school

By BEN PRESTON, EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

GILLIAN SHEPARD ordered a "hit squad" of experts to take control of a failing state school yesterday for the first time.

The Education Secretary appointed four new governors at Stratford School, in Newham, east London, in a last-ditch attempt to turn around a grant-maintained school that was supposed to be a showcase for Conservative education policy in the inner cities.

Mrs Shepherd was faced with the choice of appointing additional governors or shutting the school after inspectors reported no improvement since Stratford became the first opt-out school 18 months ago to be judged failing under the new inspection regime. She did not have more exten-

sive powers to sack the governing body and bring in an education association of experienced outsiders to take overall responsibility - as she could for council-controlled schools - because ministers framing the 1993 Education Act did not anticipate that grant-maintained schools would be judged as failing.

The move leaves the future of Anne Snelling, Stratford's headteacher, in doubt. Mrs Snelling was awarded the OBE two years ago after she fought off attempts to oust her by militant Asian governors.

Mark Frisk, chairman of the governors and a former Conservative parliamentary candidate, resigned this week. He launched an attack on Mrs Snelling yesterday and said

she should also have taken responsibility for the failure of senior management. Mrs Shepherd's decision is an embarrassment for ministers who hoped Stratford would shine a path for hundreds of other schools in Labour heartlands to quit council control. The secondary school has proved a regular source of discomfort since it opted out in 1990 to escape closure.

Opponents claimed that grant-maintained status left schools vulnerable to in-fighting when Stratford was racked by conflict two years ago between a group of mainly Asian governors and Mrs Snelling. After Stratford became the first opt-out school to be designated a "failing school" inspectors visited the

580-strong school each term but concluded in March that a reform plan by the governors was not working and that the school had made no progress.

The new governors appointed to the 17-strong body are: Paul Lewis, deputy chairman of Tate & Lyle; Pat Collarbone, headteacher of Haggerston School, Hackney; Joan Greenfield, former acting chief education officer of Hillingdon and a former government education adviser; and Dr Peter Osborne, retired headteacher of Shenfield High School, Essex. They join Daphne Gould, a former headteacher and an honorary fellow of the Institute of Education, who was appointed by Mrs Shepherd last September.

VE tributes

Continued from page 1
telling us at home of the courage and unity of purpose they encountered on all sides during their wartime travels, and of the overwhelming sense that we are all united in a common resolve.

In the body of the hall, the common resolve was not universal. Parliamentarians of all hues, from Baroness Thatcher to Tony Benn, filled the great 900-year old building, which narrowly survived a direct hit by German incendiaries in 1941: even Ken Livingstone had brought his mum. But while the Blairs and the Ashdowns embraced and kissed on the morning of Labour's own VE-Day, the Majors gave only the most cursory nod and sat at the far end of the row.

Flanked by the Duke of Edinburgh, the Prince of Wales and Princess Margaret in front of the majestic north window, the Queen said: "making these national acts of thanksgiving this weekend, and again in August when we commemorate the end of the war in the Far East, we must remember especially those who did not come back. It is to their courage and heroic sacrifice that we owe our celebrations today."

VE-Day special, pages 12-16
Jonathan Sacks, Roger Boyes, and Diary, page 20
Leading article, and Letters, page 21
Events, Weekend page 12
William Rees-Mogg, Magazine, page 8

Racing gambles on Classic recipe for Sunday best

By JULIAN MUSCAT

HORSE racing joins the ranks of mainstream sports staged on Sundays when the first meetings with betting both on and off the racecourse come under starter's orders tomorrow.

The novelty factor, allied with a favourable weather forecast, is expected to draw capacity crowds to Newmarket, the spiritual home of British racing, and Salisbury. Record advance ticket sales have been generated at Newmarket, where the Madagans 1,000 Guineas, one of five classic races run in Britain, will be contested in front of 25,000 spectators on an historic afternoon. Sunday racing

with full betting has long since been the staple diet on mainland Europe. But the British racing authorities are counting on a new, family-orientated audience for the 24 Sunday fixtures scheduled this year.

Crèches, Punch and Judy shows and shopping malls have been installed at Newmarket, and racegoers have been encouraged to take picnics to Salisbury.

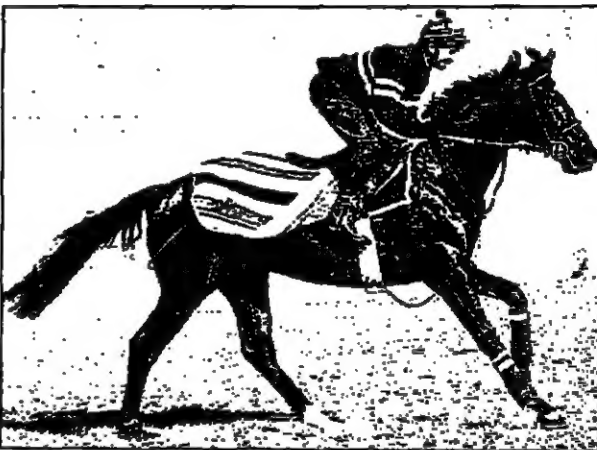
Families were much in evidence when Doncaster staged a trial meeting on Sunday three years ago. Although no betting took place, a gathering of 23,000 spectators prompted the Jockey Club, racing's rulers, to lobby hard for

deregulation of laws keeping betting shops closed on Sundays. Twelve months ago, MPs voted overwhelmingly for the necessary amendment to the Sunday Trading Bill.

Tristram Ricketts, chief executive of the British Horseracing Board, said of the Sunday racing project: "It is an important part of racing's further development. You now have the chance to have a bet, or go to the races on the most important leisure day of the week." More than 4.5 million people attended the races in 1994.

The 24 chosen racecourses have most to gain from Sunday racing, but the giant, off-course bookmaking industry has warned that profits from betting on Sunday racing will not meet increased staff costs. Most of Britain's 9,200 betting shops will open for business tomorrow but demand will dictate which shops are to open for subsequent fixtures.

Spice is added to the Newmarket fixture when Celtic Swing, the so-called "wonderhorse", contests the Madagans 2,000 Guineas this afternoon. It is expected to start an odds-on favourite for the first leg of racing's Triple Crown, a sequence last completed by Nijinsky in 1970.



Celtic Swing: odds-on to echo Nijinsky's triumph

Racing, page 41 to 43



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Battered Tories in loan-rate gamble

Continued from page 1
government. Although opinion among MPs appeared to be moving against the idea of trying to force an early leadership contest, most MPs said the atmosphere was too febrile to make any predictions over what would happen when they would assemble at Westminster on Tuesday after the VE-Day commemorations.

MPs from across the party said that a contest in November was now more likely than ever: but they also expect the Government to have a miserable few weeks as disenchanted MPs take revenge over what they see as the failings of the Government. Ministers already know that they face a serious revolt over London hospital closures next Wednesday, and certain defeat in the parliamentary by-election in Perth and Kinross on May 25, will follow.

Right-wing opponents of Mr Major seemed ready to bide their time. According to influential senior MPs, the key will be the views of their colleagues with majorities of around 5,000 to 8,000, who may have to face up to the possibility that their jobs could be on the line at the next election.

As MPs pondered the bleak results, several agreed that a Cabinet reshuffle was now essential. A new party chairman to replace Mr Hanley and Health Secretary to succeed Virginia Bottomley were seen as priorities.

Mr Major's decision to confront head-on questions about his future was taken several days ago. Asked if he would step aside if Tory MPs demanded it, he said: "It is not in my mind."

Mr Blair hailed the results as "a disaster for the Govern-

ment. More than that, however, they are a victory for new Labour... John Major isn't the Tory Party's problem. The Tory Party is John Major's problem. And the Tory Party is Britain's problem." Paddy Ashdown, the Liberal Democrat leader, said the results were a clear warning to ministers: "The Government should now listen, or go."

Sir Marcus Fox, Chairman of the Tory backbench 1922 Committee, insisted that there was no mechanism for an early leadership challenge before November. But asked



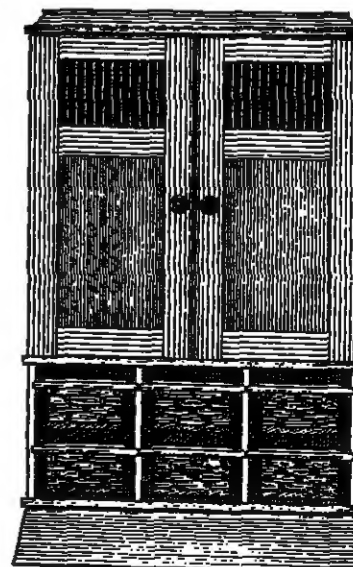
Fox: "able people awaiting promotion"

about a Cabinet reshuffle, he told the *World at One* on BBC Radio 4: "There's no doubt that there is anxiety about a number of issues that have perhaps not been presented as expertly as they should have been. I believe there are able people in Government. There are able people who are waiting for promotion."

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Despite all the warnings: 'We are just sitting in our own soup and still people are using their cars'

Smog shroud over nation recalls the filthy Fifties

By Nick Nuttall, Environment Correspondent

BRITAIN is suffering one of the worst episodes of air pollution since the 1950s as large areas of the country are blanketed by smog formed by a cocktail of toxic gases.

Levels of pollutant gases, trapped by still air and made more hazardous by the effect of sunlight, affected cities across the country, posing a serious health threat to asthmatics, bronchitis sufferers and the elderly. People suffering from lung disorders in the worst-affected areas were advised to stay indoors and avoid strenuous exercise.

There was little relief even in rural areas. Large areas including the North Yorkshire moors and the Peak District were bathed in a foul haze caused by traffic and power station pollution drifting from cities and reacting with sunlight to form ground-level ozone.

Shops reported a strong trade in barbecue charcoal despite warnings from the Government and clean air campaigners to resist lighting fires. Fiona Weir, Friends of the Earth campaign director, said the levels of pollution were among the worst since the clean air Act in the 1950s.

Alex Henderson, a senior environmental health officer at Bexley council, said: "We are just sitting in our own soup... and people continue to use their cars."

Bexley, along with all councils in London and other cities, has air pollution monitors in place. Its location on the edge of London, with motorways and power stations near by, led to the Government installing a sophisticated monitoring station that gives up-to-the-minute readings.

Mr Henderson said there were some improvements in pollution levels since the introduction in 1991 of catalytic converters on all new cars but that was not enough, he said. "In Germany they bring in speed and other restrictions when the air quality is bad."

By mid-morning yesterday levels of sulphur dioxide, produced from power stations and traffic fumes, had reached 150 parts per billion (ppb) in



Pollution obscures London landmarks yesterday, when another day of cloudless skies sent temperatures soaring and air quality sinking

Belfast and 255ppb in Bexley, southeast London. Air quality is deemed poor when sulphur dioxide, linked with childhood asthma and acid rain, breaks 125ppb over an hour.

Nitrogen dioxide levels, from vehicle exhausts, reached unhealthy levels in several locations. By mid-morning levels in Sheffield, Bexley and around central London reached 100-211ppb. Concentrations

of nitrogen dioxide, a gas linked with breathing difficulties, are deemed poor above 100ppb.

Ground-level ozone, linked with eye and lung irritations, broke international health guidelines yesterday, especially in rural areas. The World Health Organisation limits are 50-60ppb and the Government has been advised by its own experts that 50ppb should

be the national limit. The Environment Department has refused to set that level, claiming that up to half the ozone over Britain comes from the Continent. That claim was given support when national figures showed that the worst-hit area was Sibton, Suffolk, where ozone levels hit 103ppb.

Many other areas, including Birmingham, Southampton and Middlesbrough,

broke international guidelines. Environmentalists blamed policies that have increased car ownership and private travel at the expense of buses, cycling and walking.

This week a British Road Federation report showing that Britons own fewer cars than most other Europeans but use them far more. Average daily flows on British motorways are 53,600 vehi-

cles, against 35,600 in Germany and 16,000 in France, the report said.

Legislation aimed at giving local authorities more powers to curb air pollution is being brought forward in the Environment Agencies Bill before the House of Commons.

Black spots, page 1
Letters, page 21
Forecast, page 24

SMOG FILE

What causes the pollution? Traffic fumes, vapour from petrol stations and vehicle fuel tanks, and power stations. The hot, still weather prevents the gases from dispersing. The problem gases in cities are mainly sulphur dioxide and nitrogen dioxide. In the countryside, it is ozone. This is formed when pollutant gases in cities rise and react with sunlight. It drifts into rural areas where it descends and builds up at ground level.

How dangerous are these gases? All cause breathing difficulties and are linked with asthma, heart attacks, headaches, eye and skin irritations and cancers such as leukaemia.

What can people do? Those with sensitive lungs and breathing difficulties should eat more fresh fruit and vegetables - anti-oxidant foods that may neutralise the effects of the pollution. The effects of ground-level ozone may be countered by extra vitamin C and E, according to Professor Stephen Holgate of Southampton University, an asthma expert and a member of the Department of the Environment's air pollution advisory panel. He said vulnerable groups should refrain from exercise and consider increasing medication. Face masks are of little help.

What is the Government doing? Issuing advice to leave the car at home on high-pollution days and walk, cycle or take public transport. Vehicles should be parked in the shade to reduce petrol vapours. People should also refrain from painting outside and lighting barbecues.

Peer tells of sister's tortured drug life

By A Staff Reporter

THE sister of Lord Harlech and former fiancée of the rock star Eric Clapton died from an overdose of an unusually pure form of heroin just as she was beating her 20-year addiction, an inquest was told yesterday.

Alice Ormsby Gore, 43, had taken a lethal combination of heroin and alcohol before being found slumped over a bed in her bedsit in Bourne-mouth, Nigel Neville-Jones, the Dorset coroner, recording a verdict of death by misadventure, said he hoped her death had not been in vain.

He hoped the story would be given the appropriate publicity "because perhaps from that publicity others may learn of the folly of their ways if they persist in taking hard drugs and even more so if they mix those hard drugs with high amounts of alcohol."

Lord Harlech told the inquest at Poole that he had helped his sister in rehabilitation sessions for 20 years. He described her as "a difficult, tortured human being". He added: "She was naturally welcomed by people. Because of this she made friends easily. Drunkenness and drug abuse, I think, fall very often to people of high intelligence. They feel frustrated by their own inability to succeed."

Supt Peter Harrison said he was dealing with seven deaths related to overdoses involving pure heroin. Detectives were working on identifying the dealer with a view to charging him with manslaughter.

'Too considerate' Harrods buyer awarded £11,000

By Bill Frost

A HARRODS buyer who was driven out of her job for being too considerate towards staff in the two highly successful departments that she ran won her case for constructive dismissal yesterday.

Susan Corker, 50, who failed to "tread on the fingers" of those who worked for her, was awarded the maximum compensation of £11,000 by an industrial tribunal. In addition, the store was ordered to pay her £1,230 in recognition of her length of service.

Mrs Corker told the hearing in Croydon, south London, that she was forced out of her job last May because her approach towards staff was "not despotism" enough. She set up the successful corporate gifts department in February 1990, selling to clients such as Rover. Three years later she was asked to run the bridal registry department where she took the turnover from £1.25 million in

1993 to £2.11 million a year later. Last year Mrs Corker, from Chepstow, Gwent, was removed from the bridal section and demoted. She was told that Raj Assanand, a new director, had said there had been complaints about her appraisals of junior staff.

Andrea Warden, her immediate superior, said that the real reason for her demotion was that she was too soft. Mrs Corker told the hearing: "Andrea told me the Harrods policy of treating their staff was to tread on their fingers. I thought I would do things differently and treat staff like friends."

Earlier the tribunal had heard Mrs Corker described as a highly valuable member of staff. One of the store's senior executives said: "She could sell coals to Newcastle."

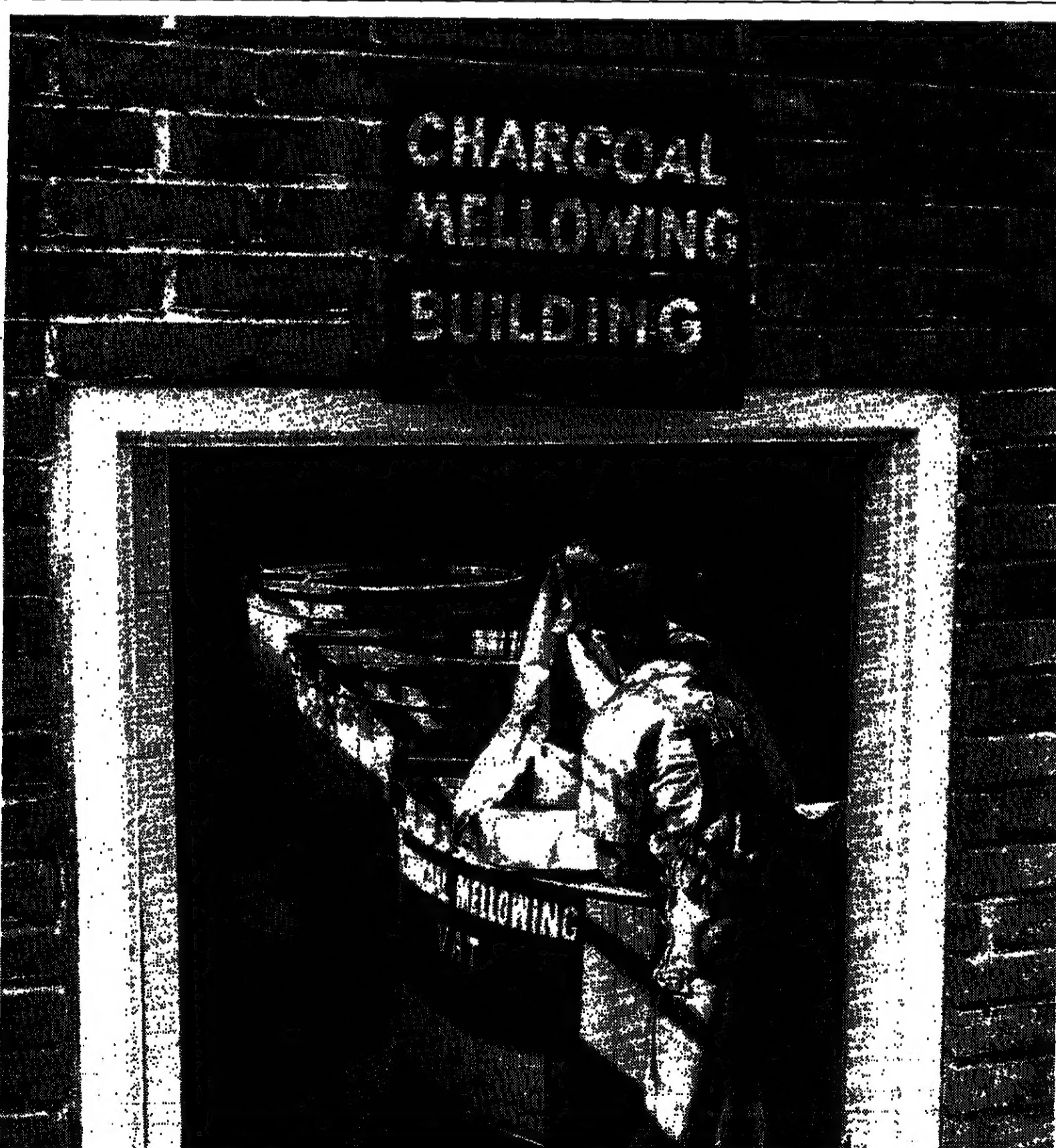
Mr Assanand, who made the decision to move Mrs Corker, admitted that he refused to give her a pay rise. He told the hearing: "We might have felt she was being paid enough already. That was my decision."

Mrs Corker, who now works as a national events organiser for the Imperial Cancer Research Fund, criticised the regime at Harrods for being tough on its employees. "They are still very tough, especially with their junior staff."

Asked after the hearing if she regretted her good manners towards staff, Mrs Corker said: "Certainly not. I am always polite."



Corker: "always polite"



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مركز من الأصل

Girl
mile
by

Bereaved
mother
put on
probation

Parents told to
vandal or face

Girl, 5, dumped 40 miles from home by sex attacker

BY PAUL WILKINSON

A GIRL aged five was abducted, sexually assaulted and dumped 40 miles from her home almost four hours later, police disclosed yesterday.

The girl was forced into a car in Newcastle upon Tyne on Thursday evening and then found wandering the streets of Darlington just after midnight. She was wearing just an anorak and white shoes and socks. The rest of her clothes were missing.

Northumbria Police is examining possible links with reports on Tyneside over the past five years of a man attempting to lure children into a car. Detective Chief Inspector Chris Symonds said: "During her ordeal she had been undressed and her white Lycra cycling shorts and red and black floral T-shirt were taken." He added that she had been forced into a white car at about 8.30pm on Thursday after a brief conversation with a man outside an off-licence near her home in the Blakelaw area of Newcastle.

A police search that included a helicopter equipped with a thermal imaging camera failed to find her, but soon after midnight a taxi driver reported finding an abandoned child on a Darlington street corner.

Mr Symonds said: "At this time she was in an undressed state and clearly upset. She is not suffering any serious physical injuries but because of her age and the experience

she has gone through she is very traumatised."

He described the child's kidnapper as tall, slim, with short black hair and wearing black trousers and a blue shirt. "This is a very serious incident indeed and we will do everything we can to catch the person responsible. There is a real risk that the man could strike again. There has certainly been an element of determination in what this man has done. He was prepared to use a degree of force to push her into the car."

Darren Lambert, the taxi driver who found the girl, said: "I asked her what she was doing and she said, 'I'm waiting for a friend. We're looking for a doggy.' She didn't seem too upset or distressed, but as soon as she said that I knew there was something seriously wrong. I just immediately thought she had

been abducted. I picked her up and put her into the back of the car and said: 'I'm going to take you to see a nice policeman.'"

Mr Lambert, 27, a father of two, asked the girl who her friend was. "She couldn't give me a straight answer, but she gave the impression she had been with a man. I asked her if she had been in a car and she said yes. She looked very lost and said that her mammy and daddy lived in Newcastle somewhere but she couldn't tell me where her home was."

Yesterday the little girl giggled and peeped around the front door of the family home as her mother, aged 40, spoke of her relief. "There were times while we were searching the streets when I never thought I would see my little angel again. I thank God that she is safe and well and back home with us where she belongs. I don't think I will ever let her out of my sight again."



Darren Lambert: taxi driver who found girl



Jane, Sheila Bowler's daughter, after the lost appeal

Aunt's killer loses appeal hearing

BY DOMINIC KENNEDY

THE Court of Appeal yesterday upheld a music teacher's conviction for killing her elderly aunt for her money and rejected criticisms of the QC who represented her at her 1993 trial.

Sheila Bowler, 65, of Rye, East Sussex, was jailed for life at Lewes Crown Court after being found guilty, by a majority of 11-1, of murdering 89-year-old Florence Jackson.

Mrs Jackson, her late husband's aunt, was found drowned in the River Brede in Sussex in May 1992, the morning after Bowler collected her from a residential home at Winchelsea.

At her trial, Bowler was described by the Crown as a "cold, calculating and callous" woman who pushed "Auntie Flo" into the river because she did not want her inheritance, a flat worth £35,000, eaten up by nursing home fees. The Crown said that after the killing Bowler let down a tyre, went to a house for help and then reported her aunt missing.

Yesterday the appeal judges rejected "entirely" criticisms by Gordon Pollock, QC, Bowler's counsel at

the appeal, against Nicholas Purnell, QC, her defence counsel at the trial, and his instructing solicitors.

They also had no doubt that the summing-up by Mr Justice Garland was fair.

The judges went out of their way to praise Mr Purnell's destruction of important planks of the prosecution evidence at the original hearing.

Bowler, whose case has been taken up by Chris Mullin, MP, and Channel 4's *Trial and Error* programme, is serving a life sentence fixed at 12 years.



Sheila Bowler: life sentence

THE SUNDAY TIMES



On VE night my mother was brought home from the pub in a wheelbarrow... Intimate memories of May 8 1945, Britain's finest hour

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A unique view of VE-Day in a special section to savour and save, in The Sunday Times tomorrow

Bereaved mother put on probation

BY A STAFF REPORTER

A MOTHER whose six-year-old daughter died after she was given wine to drink was placed on probation for three years yesterday.

Sarah Collins, 30, let her daughter Stacey toast her uncle's success in gaining a degree. The child went to bed and was later found dead after choking.

Paul Thomas, for the prosecution, said at Cardiff Crown Court that the child had an alcohol level double the legal limit for drivers. "The mother told police she had given the little girl a glass of wine," he said.

"The girl made frequent trips back to the kitchen where the 1½ litre bottle of wine was left within easy reach. The mother insists she had only one glass but we cannot say that is all she drank."

Mr Justice Scott Baker told Collins: "I do not believe you would have done anything to deliberately harm your daughter who you loved dearly and is now dead. But you must bear a significant level of responsibility for this tragedy."

Collins, of Sketty, Swansea, West Glamorgan, pleaded guilty to causing cruelty to a child. She had told police "I did not see any harm in it. It is common in France to give children wine."

After finding the body, Collins, who was separated from Stacey's father, tried to slash her wrists and drown herself in the sea. It was 30 hours after Collins had found her daughter before police and an ambulance crew were called.

Patrick Harrington, representing Collins, said: "She will no doubt view the rest of her life through a window of tears."

Students in trouble over dope issue

Police and academics have criticised students who produce the *Oxford Magazine* *Isis* after cannabis seeds were distributed with the latest issue. The edition carries an article criticising drug laws but warns students they will be breaking the law if they plant the seeds. Cultivation or consumption of cannabis is illegal but possessing or supplying the seeds is not.

Gliding death

One man was killed and another seriously injured when a glider that had just taken off crashed at an airfield near Husbands Bosworth, Leicestershire.

Fateful order

An Irish judge ordered the withdrawal of a life-support system from a woman who suffered severe brain damage during an operation 20 years ago, pending an appeal.

Pavarotti agrees

The Italian tenor Luciano Pavarotti will sing at Cardiff Arena on June 3 to raise funds for a children's hospice after a personal request from the Princess of Wales.

Arsonist jailed

David Broom, 34, a waiter, was jailed for a year by Gloucester Crown Court for setting fire to his parents' home after they banned him from the house.

Blast from past

An 18in incendiary brought by a nurse for a wartime display at a Manchester hospice was found to be live. Houses were evacuated while it was made safe.

Parents told to curb vandals or face jail

BY A STAFF REPORTER

THE parents of four teenagers agreed yesterday to keep their sons away from two council estates or to face jail themselves.

The undertaking was given at a London Central County Court hearing before Judge Pitman after allegations that the boys had engaged in two years of vandalism and juvenile behaviour on the Peckwater and Kenbrooke estates near their homes in northwest London.

Camden council sought the injunctions against the parents to deter the teenagers from further anti-social behaviour. Agreeing to the re-

quest, Judge Pitman told the parents: "Failure to observe this undertaking could amount to a custodial sentence or a fine." The boys would be allowed on the estates only if taking part in supervised activities or if dating a girl from the estate.

The father of two of the boys said the injunction was "grossly unfair". "The council has acted on conflicting information supplied by just two people. The only reason I'm going along with this is that I don't want my sons on the estate any more. I don't want to lump them in with the troublemakers."

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To all future drivers of the new Honda Civic 5 door 1.5i, a piece of advice.

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The new Civic, built in Britain we might add, does a tad more than simply sip and shift.

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Its road-holding is superior to any other car in its class thanks to a double-wishbone suspension system.

Double airbags are standard across the range, again unlike any other car in its category. And the rear is reinforced with a new roll-bar (so new, Honda have applied for a patent).

The new Civic can be had for between £12,080 and £14,880 - on the road prices that thoughtfully include a year's road tax.

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هكذا من الأصل

Minist
court
legal aid

BR admits
sham to
avoid line
inquiry



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Minister warns court clerks of legal aid sanction

By Frances Gibb, Legal Correspondent

THE Government gave a blunt warning to justices' clerks yesterday that responsibility for the legal aid system would be removed from them unless they improved controls.

John Taylor, junior Minister at the Lord Chancellor's Department, said it was likely the Auditor and Comptroller-General would refuse to approve the legal aid account, which costs more than £400 million a year, for a fifth consecutive year because of anomalies and mistakes.

"This reflects very badly on the current system and I must put it to you bluntly that it cannot be allowed to continue," he told the clerks' annual conference in Harrogate.

The minister also criticised justices' clerks over the £200 million backlog of unpaid fines. "It is imperative that we make progress in reducing the outstanding total if the credibility of the courts and justice for victims is to be maintained," he said.

There was great concern in

Parliament and among the public about the non-payment of fines, compensation orders and other monies that courts must collect. "That sentences should remain unenforced on that scale calls into question the credibility of the courts themselves."

Mr Taylor told the justices' clerks, who are the chief legal advisers to magistrates and senior court managers, that they had to ensure legal aid rules were properly followed. He particularly criticised them for not always requiring that claimants provide evidence of their means, and for making "still too many errors" in the assessment of legal aid and in calculations of the contributions to be made by claimants.

"Provided the guidance is made available and an adequate system of management control is in place, most of these basic errors ought to be avoidable and ought to be avoided," Mr Taylor said.

If the clerks "do not produce the required results, some-

thing more fundamental will be needed". The Lord Chancellor, Lord Mackay of Clashfern, had considered transferring responsibility for criminal legal aid from the magistrates courts to the Legal Aid Board. Although Lord Mackay had chosen not to do that, it was one option that would "come back into play" if significant improvement were not shown quickly.

Mr Taylor added that there was no intention to interfere with the exercise of judgment necessary in dealing with legal aid applications. Those involved, however, had to demonstrate their accountability for the use of public money.

On the unpaid fines, he said that although there was evidence that courts were committed to collecting monies and pursuing defaulters, they were often hampered by lack of information on the whereabouts of defendants. Mr Taylor said that a number of agencies, including the clerks, were involved and they needed to work together.



Portrait of the tiger given to the Duke of Marlborough by Clive of India. The Duke, who was fascinated by tigers, kept this one at Blenheim

Stubbs tiger portrait likely to fetch £5m

By Dalva Alberg, Arts Correspondent

A MAGNIFICENT portrait of a tiger by George Stubbs, an unsurpassed master of animal painting, is coming on to the market for the first time in 200 years. It is expected to fetch some £5 million at Christie's in June.

The painting, likened in importance to his monumental portraits of stalwarts of his day, was sold in the artist's

studio auction in 1807, a year after his death, for 350 guineas — the highest price achieved in that sale.

Portrait of a Royal Tiger is a near-life-size image presented by Clive of India, the Governor of Bengal, to the 4th Duke of Marlborough in the 1760s. It is the largest of three versions of the subject — a Royal Bengal tiger against a rocky landscape. The Duke, like his 18th-century contemporaries, was fascinated by tigers; he kept the animal in

this painting in a menagerie at Blenheim Palace. The house's archives include an Oxfordshire butcher's bill of 1763 showing that 24 pounds of meat were delivered every two days at three shillings a time. Such was the popularity of Stubbs's images that they were repeatedly copied in engravings by other artists. Lord Hindle, chairman of Christie's, described it as "the finest 18th-century British picture to come to auction since

the late 1980s. The picture has been sheltered from the public eye — not having been offered for sale for almost 200 years nor recently exhibited." He added: "I love this picture. I'd buy it. I don't usually say such things, though there have been others I've wanted. But this is a great picture." The portrait, which is being sold by the trustees of the Portman family, was last exhibited when it was on loan to the Tate Gallery from 1947-61.

BR admits sham to avoid line inquiry

By Our Scotland Correspondent

BRITISH Rail admitted yesterday that it was planning to run sham services at anti-social times on small stretches of track to allow it to abolish the Fort William to London sleeper service without going through the statutory closure procedures.

BR also admitted that its plans to close the sleeper on May 28 could have an impact on the Highland economy and on tourism in the region.

The Court of Session in Edinburgh was told that Highland Regional Council, which is seeking a judicial review of the planned closure, believes the scrapping of the Fort William sleeper is "unlawful, unreasonable and irrational".

The court was told that because the closure of any rail track would trigger the statutory closure procedures, BR planned to run a train from Maryhill, in Glasgow, and Bishopbriggs on the outskirts of the city — on track used only by the Fort William sleeper — departing at two minutes to midnight. A decision will be given on Tuesday.

River goes on sale at £6,000 per salmon

By Gillian Bowditch, Scotland Correspondent

ONE of Scotland's top salmon rivers is on sale for more than £1.85 million. A 12-mile stretch of the Halladale in Caithness is being sold with a six-bedroom lodge house by the river and a 50,000-acre sporting estate for £3.5 million.

The stretch of river averages 312 salmon a year and its sale heralds an upturn in the market for salmon rivers after a number of poor years.

The river is being marketed for about £6,000 a fish, still much lower than the £15,000 a fish asked for some stretches of Scottish salmon rivers in the late 1980s.

The Halladale rises near Forsinard, 125 miles north of Inverness, and enters the sea at Melvich Bay, on the north coast. It flows through heather moorland, native hardwoods, traditional farmland and the occasional rocky gorge. There are spectacular sandy beaches at Melvich and Strathly. The area is one of the last wildernesses in Europe.

TEXAS

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THE TIMES

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THE QUESTIONS

1. Sir Winston Churchill's ancestor, also called Churchill, distinguished himself as one of Britain's greatest military commanders. By what name is he better known?

2. Churchill loved returning to his old school for reunions, where he joined in the singing of the school song. What was the school and the name of the song?

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TEXAS

HOMEWARE

'I prayed very hard to stay in the fire brigade, and I ended up as a vicar'

Clergy reveal unexpected answers to their prayers

By RUTH GLEDHILL, RELIGION CORRESPONDENT

THE clergy still believe in the power of prayer, but God sometimes answers their pleadings in mysterious ways, according to a survey of about 800 priests and Christian laity.

Prayers answered vary from a woman going into labour when the vicar said "Good Lord deliver us" to finding a parking space, according to the mixture of anecdote and serious communing with God disclosed by early results of the survey.

The Rev Andy Twilley, of Birmingham, described how "a minister was praying enthusiastically about Heaven and how he desired and longed to be there — and God instantly answered the prayer, because he died that moment".

Whether ministers chose to address God as "Mother", "Father", "Jesus" or "Lord", they reported the importance and value of prayer in their lives. Canon Cedric Catton, Vicar of Exning, Suffolk, said the quickest answer to one of

his prayers was when his wife accepted his proposal of marriage, and the slowest was when he was trying to find a new secretary for his parochial church council.

Canon Catton reported how, during a litany, when the response was "Good Lord deliver us", a woman went into labour. He also claimed medical evidence for a case where "during prayer and laying on of hands, a terminal illness was permanently reversed".

The Rev Mark Worthington, a curate in Sunderland, confessed an unexpected answer to his prayers: "I suffered from genetic garrulousness and became conscious of how this prevented other people communicating with me." He prayed to become a quieter person, and a year later was in hospital having vocal nodes removed and receiving speech therapy.

The Rev Penelope Payne, from Hayling Island, prayed

for a few days' rest from her young family and two days later was admitted to hospital for a knee operation.

The Rev David Snuggs, of Southampton, said his third child was born in a hurry at home, and he and his wife had to deliver her themselves. She did not breathe immediately because the umbilical cord was wrapped around her neck. He said: "We prayed, she breathed."

The Rev Philip Johns, of Carmarthen, was praying for a job for one of his children. "A phone call followed, offering him a job." The Rev Terry Evans, of Rainhill, Merseyside, said: "Prayer works in a funny sort of way. You have to be careful about what you pray for. I prayed very hard when I was in the fire brigade that God was calling me to stay in the fire brigade, and I ended up as a vicar."

According to the survey, carried out on behalf of this year's Christian Resources Ex-

hibition at Sandown Park, Surrey, later this month, the Royal Family is top of the prayer list.

The Rev Bernie Collins, of Bournemouth, said: "They are still significant people in the nation." Canon Catton said: "They may change. We believe in penance, forgiveness and a new start."

The traditional approach to language and prayer is still popular. The Rev Chris Benyon, of Seaford, East Sussex, said: "You cannot make God a sexless person. Jesus addressed him as father. We don't address anyone as parent."

An Anglican religious sister, who requested anonymity, said: "God is my father. I do not believe in the feminist movement, inside or out of the Church. In no form whatsoever do I place a female role within the Godhead."

At Your Service, Weekend, page 2



The Rev Terry Evans: "Prayer works in a funny way"

Credo

How to live happily in God's time

Albert H. Friedlander

A number of years ago, I walked along the beach of a resort in New York State with a Christian theologian I admired and loved. Paul Johannes Tillich had fled from the Nazis and had become a profound influence within American theology. My synagogue in East Hampton was next door to his house, and I lived "on top of the shop", so that we could meet on occasions. He felt close to the Jewish tradition, and often spoke of the biblical vision which set the God of time against the gods of space. "Space and time belong together," he told me. "We measure time though space and space within time; and we exist in both. But pagans make space the ultimate value: their gods are tied to space which they defend against other gods; and they cannot believe in a unique God. And belief in space leads to belief in blood and race and nation. This leads to war: space wants to expand..."

Judaism, as Paul Tillich saw it, lives far more in time, closer to the eternity of the One God. I have always found this a source of comfort, particularly in these days of the secular which expands the space of unbelief at the expense of faith. I still live "on top of the shop" in a London synagogue. And, these days, when Jews "count the Omer" — reciting each day between Passover and Shavuot until the cycle of seven weeks is completed and next weekend's Festival of Weeks (Pentecost) is celebrated — I am happy to be caught up in the web of time, living, as it were, in sacred time.

I know Jews are not unique in this: my favourite Bach choral is *Gottes Zeit ist die allerbeste Zeit* — people of faith can live happily in God's time. But then we face the accusation that we are running away from life, that the answers of our religious faith do not meet the problems of a world of genocide and of despair. Firmly, with respect to others, I disagree. We live in the world of

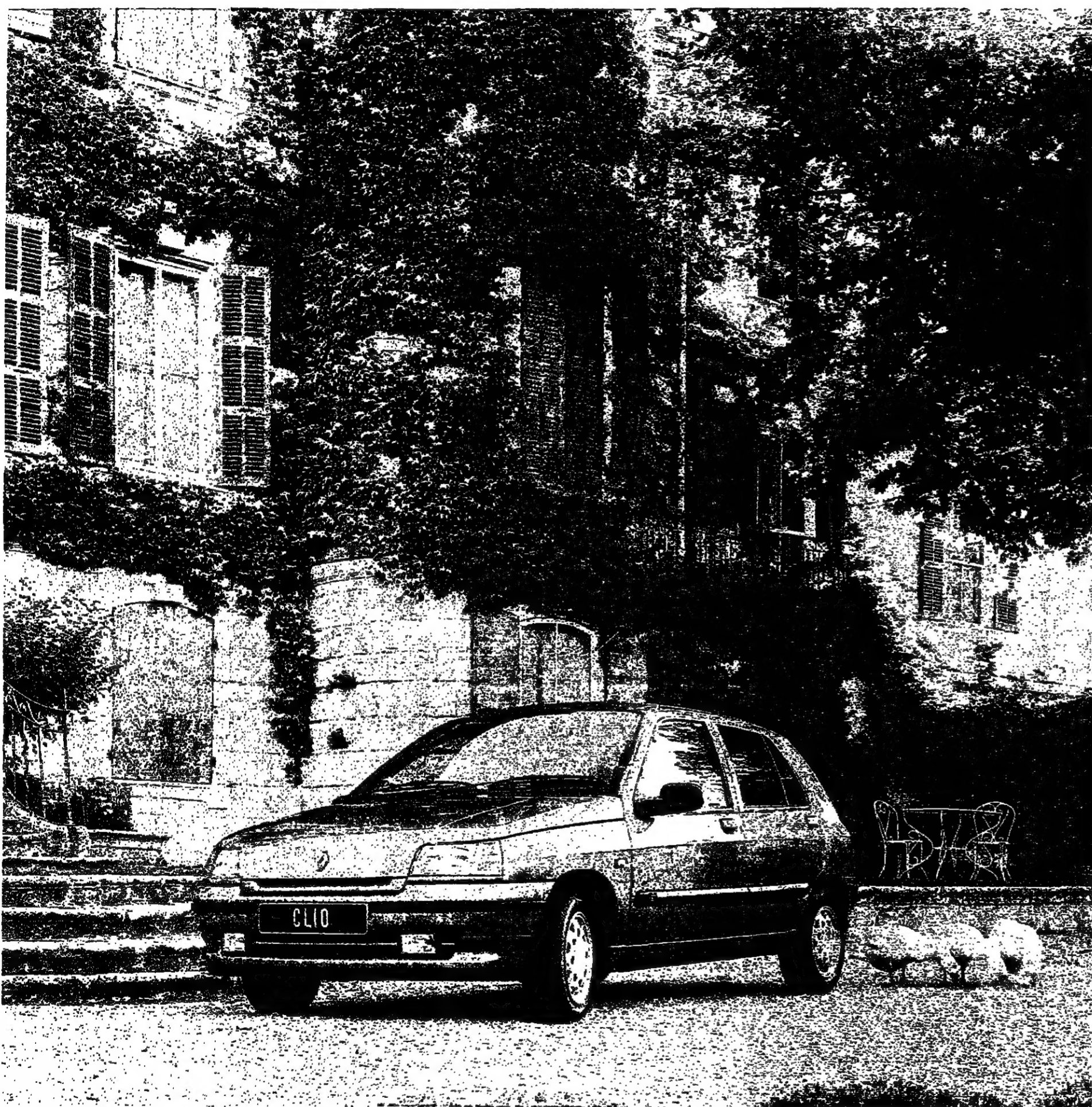
space and of time. With much horror, I view the religious fanatics of every faith who plunge into that space filled with belief in blood and race and nation. I recognise how destructive religion can be once it has surrendered to the gods of space. That is why I want to spend more time in the sanctuary.

There is a fundamental need to find the hidden resources of religious faith that stand outside of time and enter our world and our space in our sanctuaries. We can never escape from our world, from our language, from the pressures that are part of daily life. Religious language changes with each decade, and some of our finest insights will come to us through new liturgies. Yet the old endures as well. Within the serenity of the house of worship we can be approached by

the sacred objects and the sacred language that has nurtured us through the millennia. We see its mystic dimension: but we also come to understand that we are committed to a personalist and ethical vocabulary which in the end moves us from the Mystery to the Commandment.

The lovely and sadly missed Donald Swann once shared a cantata with me. *The Five Seasons of God*. There are five scrolls (megillot) in the Bible: Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther, the Song of Songs, and Ruth. We used each in turn, for summer, autumn, winter and spring, since they are read on the 9th of Av, Tabernacles, Purim and Passover. Ruth is read on the Festival of Weeks, which we called "The Season of God". The Ten Commandments were given at that time — and Ruth followed Naomi into the faith of Israel. Ruth moved into sacred time, and she became the ancestor of King David; and, says the tradition of the Messiah. Meanwhile, in all our traditions, we move along that same road.

Albert H. Friedlander is Dean of Leo Baeck College and Rabbi of Westminster Synagogue



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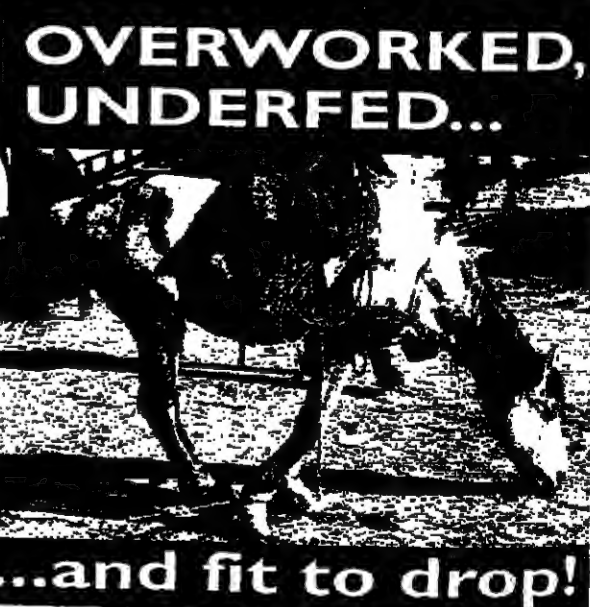
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Bitter Tory losers blame 'arrogant' leaders

TORY councillors were shattered yesterday after a night of slaughter at the hands of a furious electorate.

Within hours of the results, the Times talked to 227 defeated Tory councillors from 62 authorities around the country asking them whether John Major should be replaced as party leader, who should replace him and which aspect of the Government's performance or which policy they most blamed for the debacle.

As councillors cleared their desks, they were divided between those who, like the voters, wanted to wreak revenge on the Tory hierarchy and John Major and the staunchly loyal who could not believe what had happened and were desperate to prevent a bloodbath.

Councillors reeled off a litany of reasons for the rout. Only a handful mentioned local issues. Most laid the blame squarely on an ineffective, arrogant and out-of-touch Cabinet who did not understand the pressures of middle-class life and had loose tongues. Mr Major was considered a nice chap but not up to the job.

Few wanted to get rid of him immediately because they could think of no obvious replacement who would be able to unite the party.

However, 49 defeated councillors said Mr Major should go this year. Several were so despondent that they thought it would make no difference who led the party. Others were so jaded that, nationally, they said the Tories would benefit from a period in Opposition and a fresh start with a new younger leader in two years.

The majority, 175, said the



David McVicar, who lost his seat on South Beds District Council: "The disagreement between the Prime Minister and Chancellor on taxation, 24 hours before a key election, was the headbut which finished it all. I would vote for Michael Heseltine as the figure people could rally round."



Joan Selby, who survived a Tory rout at Castle Point, Essex: "Something has to change if we are to stand any chance of winning the next election. If it's necessary to have a new leader, the powers that be will see that happens. As far as I can see there is nobody who stands out."



Frank Eadie, Conservative group leader at Trafford metropolitan borough, the regional flagship over which the party lost absolute control: "I do not put it down to the local party. It's simply time for our leader to begin acting like a Tory."



Peter Shirley, a Walsall businessman, lost his council seat after eight years: "I never thought John Major should have been leader - he hasn't got the intellectual or leadership ability and nobody knows what he stands for. Just look at Jeremy Hanley - was that a joke when he was appointed?"



Anne Underwood, who kept her seat at Sutton Coldfield: "I hope central government has now got the message that people are still worried about VAT on fuel and the way members of the party are constantly falling out with each other. Mr Clarke should be ditched. He is a liability."

HEALTH

Forty-five councillors said the Government's policy on reform of the NHS was botched and said Mrs Bottomley had been unable to control the way the nurses' pay award had been handled. In areas with high numbers of retired voters, defeated councillors were more angry about prescription charges.

EUROPE

The former councillors were less concerned about Europe than their squabbling MPs. In pockets of the country, like Devon and Cornwall where fishing has been a real issue, there is concern over the European Union fishing policy, several said the Government could win the next general election if it fought on an anti-Europe ticket.

SELEGE

The series of ministerial resignations, and allegations about sexual or other misconduct, were blamed by six people. Twelve said that, by contrast, Tony Blair looked a model of decorum and his new-look party was a serious threat.

Finally the media was blamed for having created a self-fulfilling prophecy by writing beforehand that the election would be a Tory disaster.

Times reporting team: Alice Thomson, Ian Murray, Paul Wilkinson, Kate Alderson, James Landale, Marianne Curphey, Ed Gorman, Marianne Darch, Andrew Pierce.

THE TORY LEADERSHIP QUESTION			
LEADERSHIP		ISSUES BLAMED FOR DEFEAT	
Major should stay	175	Bad PR (Banana skins etc)	148
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Redwood, Donnell, Hurd, Clarke, Elizabeth Hurley	1	Tory Blair factor	12
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Results of 227 interviews with Conservative councillors from 62 authorities

Essex anger is strongest

By Alice Thomson, Political Reporter

ESSEX councillors, once the bedrock of Thatcherite Britain, were the most vicious in their condemnation of John Major. From Chelmsford to Castlepoint and Basildon, defeated councillors vented their frustrations and criticised the Government.

In the North East, whose councillors want a tough leader and a Government that is not constantly forced into U-turns. They apportion equal blame to the Eurosceptics.

In Norfolk, they wanted ministers to start using their common sense. In Devon, the fishing wars were seen as a major problem, as were Euro-regulations and unfair increases in water prices.

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Police marksmen shadow armed bodyguards for security alert

By STEWART TENDLER
CRIME CORRESPONDENT

PROTECTING fifty heads of state for the VE-Day commemoration events this weekend will require one of the biggest security and crowd control operations ever seen in London.

Scotland Yard is using 3,600 uniformed officers over the three days to patrol crowds that could reach a million. Hundreds of

plainclothes and specialist firearms officers will provide guards for up to 80 dignitaries. Fourteen forces outside London are providing extra police motorcyclists.

No other event has brought so many heads of state, royalty and senior politicians to London since the Coronation in 1953. Forty years on, however, worries about terrorism have vastly increased, and the fear of assassination attempts now determine virtually all the arrangements for public appearances and ceremonies.

The police have made clear to foreign delegations that visiting bodyguards are expected to surrender their weapons. Some may, exceptionally, be allowed to keep them after special representations to David Vassess, an Assistant Commissioner at the Yard. It is understood that bodyguards from about half a dozen countries, including the United States and

Israel, have been allowed to carry guns during visits. But each armed bodyguard is shadowed by another armed Special Branch officer. Each bodyguard is issued with a special permit and given the rules of engagement written in his own language. If he fired he would face investigation, as with a British officer, and possible charges if he fired without sufficient reason.

Police are optimistic about security, suggesting that the peace

process in Northern Ireland has changed the climate. Despite the Oklahoma City attack, no special extra security has been requested by the Americans, although Vice-President Gore will travel in an imported armoured car.

Because of the large numbers of VIPs attending events such as the Guildhall dinner tonight, the service at St Paul's and six special lunches afterwards, the police are organising secret rendezvous

points to marshal the guests. The VIPs in their cars will then be taken in groups to the events. Two police control rooms will be open 24 hours during the weekend and a mobile control room will also operate at Hyde Park as police control the crowds and traffic. A police team of five has been planning operations for nearly nine months. The instructions sent out to officers have even been printed on red, white and blue

sheets to mark the occasion. The plans include photographs and details of disturbed people with a fixation about the Royal Family who have caused a nuisance at events in the past.

Police say their worst nightmare is a crowd disaster. The area inside the 60-acre Hyde Park site will be run by stewards and there will be a heavy police presence inside the park to manage the crowds, especially as they leave.

Leaders assemble for thanksgiving and reconciliation

By MICHAEL BINYON, DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

KINGS, Presidents and Prime Ministers from Europe, the Commonwealth and the former Soviet Union began arriving yesterday to take part in the most glittering international celebration Britain has staged since the Coronation.

Representatives of 57 nations will attend a banquet at Guildhall tonight, a service of thanksgiving, reconciliation and hope in St Paul's tomorrow morning and a ceremony of music and remembrance in Hyde Park in the afternoon, having been entertained to lunch in Buckingham Palace by the Queen.

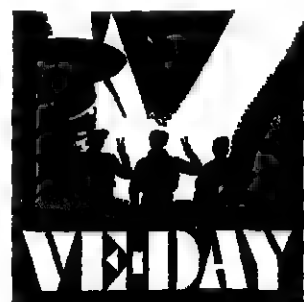
The criteria for invitation was that the country should have been fought over during the war or that they should have contributed at least a brigade of troops to the European theatre. All the main combatants in Europe will therefore be represented, including those such as Hungary, Austria, Finland, Romania and Italy which fought for at least part of the war on Germany's side. Germany is doubly represented — by its President and its Chancellor.

All 15 former Soviet republics have been invited, as the Red Army drew men from every part of the country, including Central Asia. Only two leaders from the former Soviet Union are not coming: President Shevardnadze of Georgia, who was recently in Britain on an official visit and whose country is in turmoil, and President Rakhmonov of Tajikistan, who faces an armed rebellion.

Although Yugoslavia saw

some of the fiercest partisan fighting during the war, not all the successor states have been invited. No invitations were sent to Serbia, Montenegro or the rump federal Yugoslavia.

The invitations to both President Tudjman of Croatia and President Izetbegovic of Bosnia have caused bitterness



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William Rees-Mogg Magazine

among many Serbs, because of their wartime suffering at the hands of the pro-Nazi puppet Croat Government as well as today's troubles. The latest upsurge in fighting in the former Yugoslavia makes it doubtful whether both leaders will in fact be present.

President Gligorov of the Former Yugoslav Republic of

Macedonia is separated by a wide margin from President Stephanopoulos of Greece, whose country refuses to recognise Mr Gligorov's republic. The Greek leader, elected only in March, comes second from last in protocol order because he is the youngest in office, although his country saw heavy fighting during the war. He is followed by Gibraltar, the only British dependency separately represented.

The Commonwealth will be little represented at the weekend ceremonies. Although many soldiers from the colonies — especially in Africa — joined up, most were sent to fight the Japanese. Special commemorations will be held to mark their wartime service in the VJ-Day commemorations, which will be limited to Commonwealth participants.

Two countries that were far from the European theatre have been invited because of their special war efforts. Jordan, then known as Transjordan, declared war on Germany on the same day as Britain. The Arab Legion, under its British commander John Glubb, saw active service in North Africa with Montgomery's forces, fought the Vichy French in Syria and helped put down the pro-Axis revolt in Iraq.

Brazil sent an expeditionary force of 25,000 officers and men to Italy to help the Allied campaign. Brazil declared war in 1942 in response to German attacks on Brazilian ships, and in 1944 became the only Latin American country to send troops to Europe.



Canadian veterans perched on a Sherman tank in an Amsterdam liberation parade yesterday, led by a Dutch ex-soldier on a cycle carrying his country's flag

Protocol reigns supreme at commemoration

By OUR DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

THE order in which the kings, presidents, prime ministers and statesmen will arrive and be seated at the VE-Day events is determined by their duration in office. Leading all the nations taking part in the celebrations will be King Husain of Jordan, who was enthroned in August 1952. He will be followed, in strict protocol order, by:

Grand Duke Jean of Luxembourg, Princess Benedikte of Denmark (standing in for Queen Margrethe), King Birendra of Nepal, Queen Beatrix of The Netherlands, President Sir K. J. Masire, President Francois Mitterrand of France, President Roman Herzog of Germany, Chancellor Helmut Kohl of Germany, King Mswati III of Swaziland, President Noor Mohammed Hassanali of Trinidad & Tobago, President Milan Kucan of Slovenia, President Ion Iliescu of Romania, President Franjo Tudjman of Croatia, President Zhelyu Zhelev of Bulgaria, President Arpad Gontz of Hungary, James Bolger, Prime Minister of New Zealand, Wladyslaw Bartoszewski, Foreign Minister of Poland (standing in for President Walesa), President Alija Izetbegovic of Bosnia, Prince Haakon of Norway (standing in for King Harald), President Kiro Gligorov of Macedonia, President Yeltsin of Russia

is not coming but will be represented instead by his Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin, followed by President Abdur Rahman Biswas of Bangladesh, President Levon Ter-Petrosian of Armenia, President Askar Akayev of Kirghizia, President Nursultan Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan, Ion Genu, Deputy Prime Minister of Moldova (standing in for President Snegur), Senator Robert Pay of Australia (standing in for Paul Keating, the Prime Minister), Bakhtiyor Guliyamov, State Counsellor of Uzbekistan (standing in for President Karimov), President Sali Berisha of Albania.

Italy, one of several countries whose forces fought against the Allies, will be represented by President Os-

car Luigi Scalfaro. He will be followed by President Saparmyrat Niyazov of Turkmenistan, President Thomas Klestil of Austria, Franab Mukherjee, Foreign Minister of India (standing in for President Sharmila), President Lennart Meri of Estonia, Vice-President Al Gore of the United States (standing in for President Clinton), President Vaclav Havel of the Czech Republic, President Glafos Clerides of Cyprus, President Algirdas Brazauskas of Lithuania, President Michal Kovac of Slovakia.

President Ezer Weizman of Israel will be one of the three heads of state who fought for the British during the war. He will be followed by Sir Howard Cooke, the Governor-General of Jamaica, President Gunis Ullmanis of Latvia, Prince Philippe of Belgium (standing in for King Albert),



King Husain of Jordan

President Haidar Aliiev of Azerbaijan, Jean Chrétien, Prime Minister of Canada, Yousef Ghann, Speaker of the National Assembly of Pakistan (standing in for President Leghari), President Martti Ahtisaari of Finland, President Mladun Bonnici of Malta.

President Mandela of South Africa will not be coming, but will be represented by the first deputy president Thabo Mbeki, followed by President Leonid Kuchma of Ukraine, Mikhail Chirig, Prime Minister of Belorussia (standing in for President Lukashenko), President Fernando Cardoso of Brazil, King Moshohoe III of Lesotho, President Konstantinos Stephanopoulos of Greece and Joseph Fischer, the Deputy Chief Minister of Gibraltar (standing in for Joe Bossano, the Chief Minister) lost in protocol order because Gibraltar is a dependency, Chief Emeke Anyaoku, the Commonwealth Secretary-General, and John Major will bring up the rear.

Allied servicemen who became heads of state

By MICHAEL BINYON

SPECIAL honour and attention will be accorded to three of the guests who themselves fought with British forces during the war: Grand Duke Jean of Luxembourg, President Weizman of Israel and President Clerides of Cyprus. The Grand Duke, now 74, was at school at Ampleforth in England, and went into exile in Canada after the German invasion of Luxembourg. After finishing his law studies, he was commissioned as an officer in the Irish Guards and took part in the liberation of France and Belgium. His father was a British brigadier-general.

Ezer Weizman, brought up in Palestine, joined the RAF as a volunteer at the age of 18 in 1942 and spent time at the RAF staff college. He was trained in Rhodesia as a pilot, seeing action in North Africa and India. After the war he studied aeronautics in Britain before returning to Palestine.

President Clerides, now 76, served in Bomber Com-

mand. He escaped twice from German POW camps and was mentioned in dispatches for distinguished service. He was studying law at King's College London when war was declared. In the RAF he saw action in frequent raids on Germany as a pilot and bomber with 115 Squadron. "Twice my plane was riddled with bullets and I managed to get back across the Channel and belly land in some fields," he said.

President Mitterrand, who joined the French Resistance, also saw war service. But the most poignant memories come from Wladyslaw Bartoszewski, the Foreign Minister of Poland, who at the age of 18 was arrested by the SS in its round-up of intellectuals and sent to Auschwitz in 1940. He was released in April 1941 and soon joined a Catholic resistance group to help persecuted Jews. In 1942 he joined the Home Army of the Polish Government in exile in London, and served in Krakow in 1944-45.



Grand Duke Jean, left, and President Weizman

Forgotten army's plea

WHILE victory was being celebrated in Europe, war was still raging in the Pacific. Sub-Lieutenant F. J. Atkins, commanding a landing craft off Burma, wrote to his fiancée on May 7, 1945: "My own darling Sheila, we are now at sea — there ain't a living thing

for miles and it's lovely! The only fly in the ointment is that we have just heard that it's V-day tomorrow... Like everyone else out here, I wish more than ever that I were home at this time. I wonder how many people will give a thought for the 14th Army on V-day."



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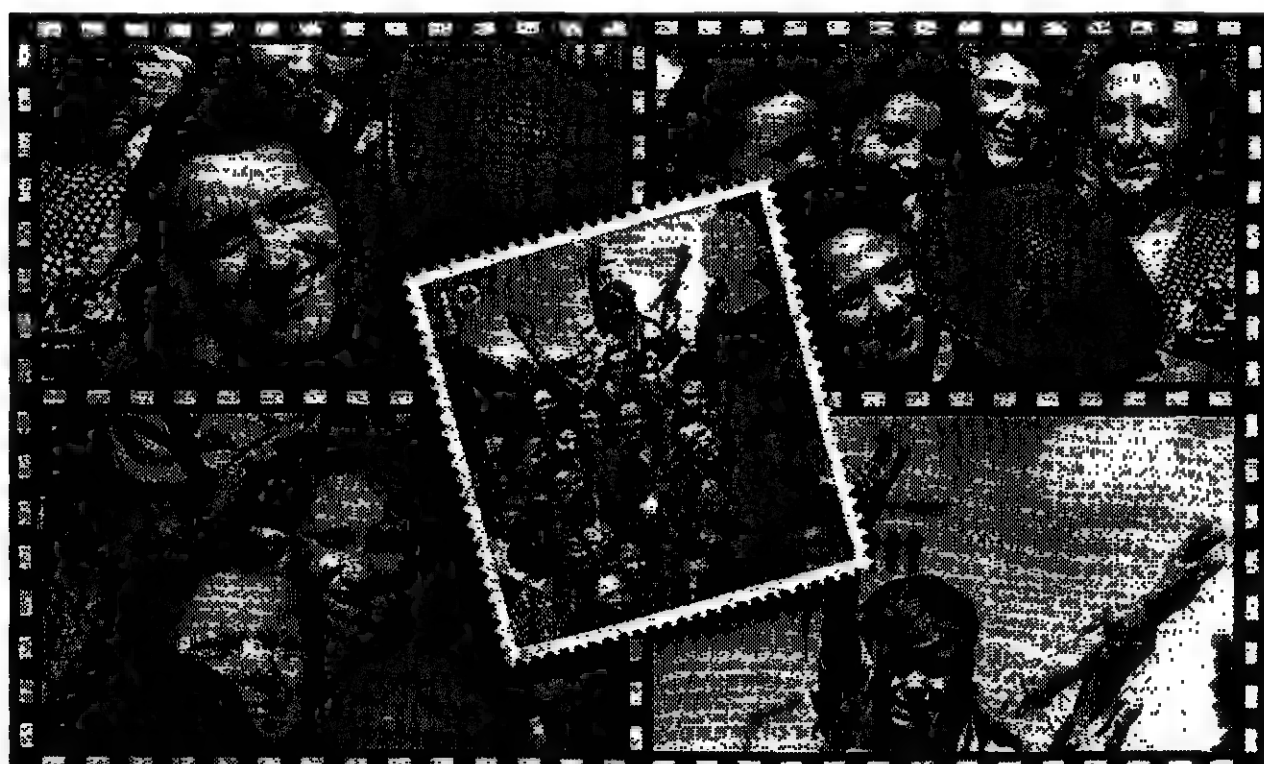
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the occasion. The photographs and video people with a the Royal Family used a nuisance at last. The worst nightmare disaster. The area are Hyde Park site stewards and there police presence to manage the daily as they leave.

signs at ation

FOR califano. He will be President Super-azov of Turkmenistan Thomas Klestil, Austria. Prandl, Foreign Minister (standing in for Pharmal. President of Estonia Vice-Al Gore of the es (standing in for Clinton). President vel of the Czech President Katsouras of Cyprus. President azauskas of Lithuania. Michael Kovac.

AS THE parachute jolted open. Flying Officer Johnny Smythe watched the flak burst around him and saw in the searchlight beam that there were bloodstains on his flying jacket.

"I doubted I would reach the ground alive and if I did, what would they make of this large black man?" the 6ft 5in QC from Sierra Leone recalled last night as he prepared to celebrate the 50th anniversary of his liberation by the Red Army from a prisoner-of-war camp. His Lancaster was attacked by fighters and hit by anti-aircraft fire during a night raid over Berlin on November 18, 1943. As the engines died, the crew baled out. Mr Smythe, now 79, hit the ground with a "sickening jolt" and realised that his wounds were bleeding profusely. Bracing himself against

the pain, he hid his parachute and set out for a nearby barn. "I knew I had to get away from the area. We had been briefed that German fury over the raids was such that aircrew who made it to the ground were being shot out of hand," he recalled.

Minutes later he heard voices. "Men in uniform came into the barn where I was hiding behind some straw. Then they opened up — raked the place with automatic fire," Smythe decided discretion was the better part of valour and gave himself up. "They could not

believe their eyes. I am sure that is what saved me from summary execution. To see a black man — and an officer to boot — was more than they could come to terms with. They just stood there gaping," he said.

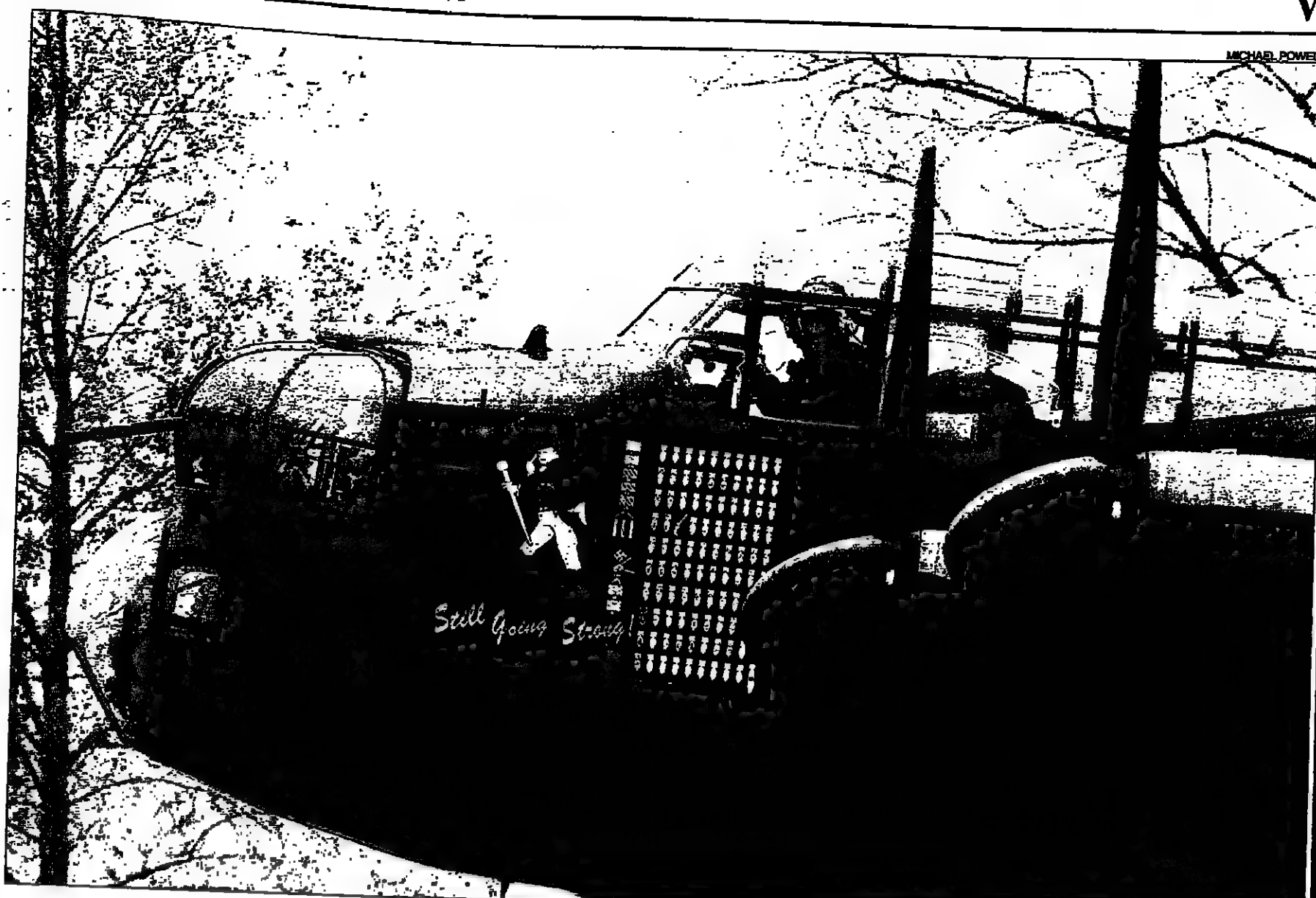
Taken to an interrogation centre and treated for his wounds, Smythe was at first a "curiosity, like something in the zoo", with officers coming from Berlin simply to stare at him. The novelty soon wore off, however, as Smythe persistently refused to tell his captors anything more than his name, rank and

serial number. "Death came close when I was beaten up with a rifle butt by this little corporal. He bludgeoned and kicked me. I was going to strangle him, but God controlled me. The other soldiers had gathered around to watch and I knew they would shoot me if I attacked the little man."

Death came closer still a week later before he was to be transferred to Stalag Luft One in Pomerania. "They dragged me from my cell, which was no bigger than a lavatory, and blindfolded me. I was taken outside and put against a post. I heard the bolt action on half a dozen rifles after the firing squad took their places. Then I just waited for what seemed like hours. Eventually he lifted his blindfold. The officer saluted me and told me I was a brave soldier."

Then they took my boots and pushed me into the truck which was to take me to Stalag Luft One. Once behind the wire, Smythe played an active role on the escape committee but could never break out himself. "I don't think a six foot five black man would have got very far in Pomerania somehow. I would have stuck out like a sore thumb."

Although treated reasonably by his captors and much-loved by fellow officers, he found life as a PoW "intolerably dull". Only once was he confronted with the hard truth of Nazism. "There was a Jewish RAF officer with us — a Pole who had joined up in 1940. The SS came for him one day but we managed to convince the camp doctor, a Luftwaffe man, to tell them he was sick. But those filthy



Sunday's Lancaster flypast will be watched by former Flying Officer Johnny Smythe, right, who was shot down over Berlin in 1943 and taken prisoner. "I would die a happy man if I could climb aboard that old bomber again"

'Being a black man saved me from death'

■ Germans who captured Flying Officer Johnny Smythe treated him "as a curiosity, like something in a zoo". Bill Frost met the veteran

thugs kept coming back. Eventually we were beaten, they took him away to a concentration camp. It was our saddest day."

Liberated by the Russians 50 years ago today, Mr Smythe recalled how a Red Army colonel embraced him and gave him vodka. "I was fated because I was black. They took me to a town near the camp and I watched as they looted. A pretty young German woman was crying as they took all her valuables. When I saw her tears I wanted to help, but the Russians wouldn't listen. I had hated the Germans, wanted to kill the bastards for what they had done to the world. But something changed inside me when I saw the tears and the hopelessness on her face." As he prepares to celebrate VE-Day, Mr Smythe finds that

pride and sorrow are struggling for control of his emotions. "There were so many who never came back — friends from all over Britain the Commonwealth. I see their faces in my mind's eye and remember their bravery."

After the war, he studied law and thrived in his chosen profession. He is a former attorney-general of Sierra Leone and took silk in 1968. He is married with four children. Tomorrow morning, after attending a church service near his home in Thame, Oxfordshire, he will watch a flypast of Second World War planes. Among them will be a Lancaster. "I would die a happy man if I could just climb aboard that old bomber again," he says wistfully. "I will never forget the memory of those times, no one should."

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Guests from 1945 party roll out the barrel again

By JOHN YOUNG

AMONG those celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of VE-Day at street parties will be residents of the Wickenden Estate in Sevenoaks, Kent. Tomorrow afternoon some of those who attended the original party will mingle with children for whom the events of 1939-45 are remote and ancient history.

The *Sevenoaks News* of 50 years ago records that "a grand Victory party was organised for about a hundred children... including a baby show, entertainment, games and races of all sorts."

Pastor F. H. O'Connor opened the proceedings at 4.30 with Grace and a hymn of thanksgiving, and then the children, their ages ranging from under a year to 16 years, were allowed to start the bumper tea that had been provided for them by parents and friends, consisting of sandwiches, biscuits, cakes, buns, jellies, trifles and blancmanges etc.

"So great was the number of cakes, buns and biscuits left over that the committee decided to allow the mothers of the children to buy them later in the evening."

Mr Walter Walking, dressed in a navy-blue and white dress with ribbons in his hair, made the children roar with laughter by pushing Mr George Bonnet, dressed as a baby... in a pram along the road. Mr Charlie Canon, the well known local ventriloquist,

then entertained the children with his dummy dressed in the uniform of the RAF, and his son, a boy of 15 years or so, sang in a charming soprano voice. "A brown bird singing", accompanying himself on the piano."

Just two months before the party, a V2 rocket had exploded in Wickenden Road, destroying four houses and killing nine people, including

two small children. Among the children at the party was Ian Stupples, who now works in the design department of *The Times*; he was five years old at the time and is seventh from the front on the left of the main table.

Eighteen months later the newspaper reported that the residents of the estate had raised funds for a welcome home dinner for more than a

hundred former servicemen and women, the only people in the town to do so.

The chairman of the organising committee reported that it had received no encouragement from the local council.

"Apparently they were blissfully unaware that the war was over, or else they did not realise their civic responsibilities," he said.

THE reaction of troops serving in Europe to the news of surrender varied markedly. Private Eric Codling, 8th Battalion, The Middlesex Regiment: Out came the rum, a toast to our comrades who were not there to share this moment of happiness. It seemed a lifetime since we had embarked on this adventure. Forty men drawn together by fate landed in Normandy; almost a year after, less than half were present.

Major Peter Martin, 2nd Battalion, The Cheshire Regiment: I felt an incredible sense of anti-climax. From the age of 19 the German war had always been there. I couldn't see much point in existence any more. I can remember weeping that night. I don't think I was the only person in the division.

Captain Joe Patterson, of the 2nd Special Air Service Regiment: Almost at once we had a panic stand-to, as one of our Jeeps had just been shot up and the four occupants taken prisoner by outposts of 400 militant SS. We went chasing up in the half-light and found the Jeep all shot up and full of blood. We took only a few prisoners, mostly boys of 15 to 16, whom we let go.

The Reverend Leslie Skinner, chaplain to the Sherwood Rangers: Wakened to sound and sight of Very lights being fired everywhere. Guessed the surrender had been announced. Too tired and cold to care. Stayed in bed.

From Victory in Europe, by Julian Thompson (Sidgwick & Jackson, £25)



The way we were: the 1945 party on the Wickenden Estate at Sevenoaks, Kent.

REACTION TO SURRENDER

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A schoolgirl's diary expresses pride in democratic Britain



Shirley Summerskill with her parents on VE-Day

ON THE day that victory in Europe was declared, Shirley Summerskill, who became a doctor and Labour MP for Halifax, was 13. Her mother was MP for West Fulham and a member of Labour's National Executive Committee, and Shirley had a privileged view of the celebrations. This is an extract from her diary.

"The sun was shining brightly today and I had no school. All the newspapers had peace news and I have saved them for future reference."

After lunch we decided to go out in the car to the West End, Whitehall etc, and Mama wanted to go to the House. It being a public holiday, everyone looked happy. They wore their light summer clothes, carried no bags and the buses were comparatively empty. People just strolled up and down the streets arm in arm, not hurrying at all. Some youths were wearing funny hats and waved rattles; many of the girls wore red, white and blue ribbons or flowers in their hair. In Whitehall crowds were sitting on the kerb and pavement, four or five deep, as if they were there for the day.

The crowds before the House of Commons were terrific. They were all over the roads, pressed against every wall, on all the monuments, hanging out of the windows and lining the roofs of all the buildings in sight.

Soon the bells on Westminster

Abbey and St Margaret's pealed out and we stood at the door [of St Margaret's] and recognised many old faces.

It [the service] was wisely made a short one and included a prayer for the MPs killed in battle. The singing was mainly composed of deep male voices and when the doors were swung open and the sun shone into the war-scarred church I felt proud of Britain and its people outside and proud of our free democratic Government, whatever party.

[Later] we walked to Piccadilly Circus... There was no traffic. Soldiers climbed up lamp posts, sailors danced around in a ring, people sang any song that came into their heads and fireworks were set off under our feet... All the way [home] they were dancing round bonfires on bomb sites and singing on the roads."

hundred-odd other MPs, some known, some unknown but I recognised many old faces.

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Thousands of ex-Servicemen are still paying a high price for their country.

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For 36 nail-biting hours, fear of false dawn kept nation guessing

News of surrender held back

BY ALAN HAMILTON

NEVER was there such a tantalising day as May 7, 1945, as the nation waited in expectation and in vain for some official word that the war in Europe was at an end.

Clumsy news management and a craven desire to humour the Russians conspired to ensure that Britain was not formally told of the German surrender until more than 36 hours after it had happened. By the time VE-Day dawned, the country's fingernails were bitten to the quick.

General Jodi and Admiral Donitz had signed the act of unconditional surrender at 2.41am on the 7th at Eisenhower's headquarters in Rheims. News correspondents at the scene rushed to tell the world what it had so long waited to hear, but found themselves denied access to all the telephones and teleprinters, stymied by the last great act of wartime censorship. Bowing to Russian pressure, the Western allies had agreed to a complete news blackout until the surrender had been ratified by Marshal Zhukov at his Red Army headquarters in

Berlin. Edward Kennedy, correspondent of the Associated Press news agency, would have none of it. He leapt into a car and drove through the night to Paris, where he filed the story to his London bureau with the help of a military censor unaware of the arrangement for delay. Within minutes teleprinters in newspapers and radio stations throughout the world were chattering out the magic sentence: "Germany surrendered unconditionally to the Western allies and Russia 2.41am French time today." Allied supreme headquarters was furious about the leak and issued a denial, which was enough to cast a shadow of doubt across the world's newsrooms. There had been false alarms before. The newsrooms sat on the story.

On the home front, the tension was almost unbearable. People had an ear cocked to the wireless all day, desperate for news. Halfway through the afternoon, passengers at Euston froze when the station

announcer suddenly boomed: "Here is an important announcement," then howled with indignation when he continued: "The 4.09 to Northampton will leave from platform 7, and not as shown on the indicator."

At six o'clock the BBC announced that the Prime Minister would not be broadcasting that night. Finally, at

6 Here is an important announcement... The 4.09 to Northampton will leave from platform 7

7.40pm, the radio announced that the next day would be celebrated as Victory in Europe Day and would be a national holiday. Stuart Hibberd, the announcer, read a miserably colourless official statement: "It is understood that, in accordance with arrangements between the three great powers, an official announcement will be broadcast

by the Prime Minister at 3 o'clock tomorrow." Still no mention of the surrender or declaration that the war was at an end. But the news was enough to alert the nation to clear the decks for a multitude of street parties.

There had been signs enough for some weeks that a semblance of normality was returning to the home front.

On April 20, Herbert Morrison had announced to a cheering Commons that the blackout would be abolished, except in coastal areas, and throughout the country householders were showered with dust and dead spiders as they dismantled their window screens. Allied forces had crossed the Rhine in March, and by April it had become legal again to buy a large-scale map, have a radio in the car, sleep outdoors in an uncensored tent, release a racing pigeon without police permission, and sound a factory hooter.

Trousers were once again allowed turn-ups as the textile

shortage eased. Since the end of April Union Jacks had been on sale in the big stores, with Selfridges widely acclaimed as having the best flag counter. On May 7, as the nation strained for news of the surrender, the Board of Trade let slip the hint of imminent victory: "Until the end of May you may buy cotton bunting without coupons, as long as it is red, white or blue and does not cost more than 1s 3d a square yard."

It was not until three in the afternoon of May 8 that Churchill went on the radio to make the first official pronouncement of what everyone by now knew. "Hostilities will officially end at one minute after midnight tonight. The German war is therefore at an end. Long live the cause of freedom. God save the King."

Nobody was more pleased than readers of that morning's *Daily Mirror*. After six tantalising war years, *Jane*, the eponymous heroine of the era's most celebrated strip cartoon, celebrated victory in Europe by finally taking off her clothes.



The picture of a reunion that captured a nation's relief: inset, Brian Jeffreys today

Mask is lifted on an unsung hero

BY A STAFF REPORTER

AN ANGELIC child whose picture touched the nation on VE-Day has been tracked down after 50 years. The photo of six-year-old Brian Jeffreys being hugged and kissed by his soldier father has resurfaced as one of BT's special VE-Day phonecards.

The 1945 picture showed Albie Jeffreys cuddling and kissing the cheek of his cherubic son. It became a symbol of the happiness and relief felt by millions at the end of the war but father and son have remained anonymous for 50 years.

Brian, now a printer living in Westgate, Kent, had been evacuated from his home in Old Kent Road, scene of some of the worst bombing. His father, who died last year aged 77, was a champion swimmer and became an unsung hero during the evacuation of Dunkirk. He saved two men from drowning and suffered damage to his hearing from gunfire.

A private, the former van driver became Lord Gaunt's chauffeur after Dunkirk. He

needed permission from his superior to kiss his son while in uniform.

Mr Jeffreys said yesterday: "Dad never wanted to be in the limelight so he stayed an unsung hero. He never let on he was in the photo, even when famous people wrote and talked about it."

Albie's widow has gone back to the East End, at the age of 80, to be near other members of her family. Mr Jeffreys added: "I was six when the picture was taken. I remember a great big flash-bulb going off. We were a family of Cockney sparrows and ever so proud of what Dad did. He talked about it a bit and his grandchildren loved to hear him matter about the old days. He would have loved all the VE-Day story-telling and memories."

Now with four grown-up children, Mr Jeffreys and his wife Valerie, 55, plan to celebrate VE-Day with a barbecue. The original photograph appears on one of six special phonecards issued by BT for VE-Day.

Children's street parties and shows

EVENTS arranged for children as part of the VE-Day celebrations on Monday range from quizzes and displays to theatre, funfairs and story-telling. The following are a selection of those planned around London.

The Oxford Street Children's Party: Celebrations for children aged 5-12 for the 125th anniversary of the British Red Cross with quizzes, competitions and first-aid workshops. VE-Day story-telling, games, clowns, magicians and street theatre. Admission free. 11.30am-2.30pm. (0171) 235 5454.

Little Venice Canalway Cavalcade: A waterways festival celebrating VE-Day and the bicentenary of the Paddington Canal. Among the attractions are a pageant of boats, craft stalls, entertainments and theatre, boat trips and children's activities including a teddy bears' picnic. Admission free. (0181) 533 5128.

Hyde Park, Park Lane side: Families Day, 10am to 5pm. A host of events, including live arts, exhibitions, parachute plays and, at 3pm, a Workers' Playtime Concert.

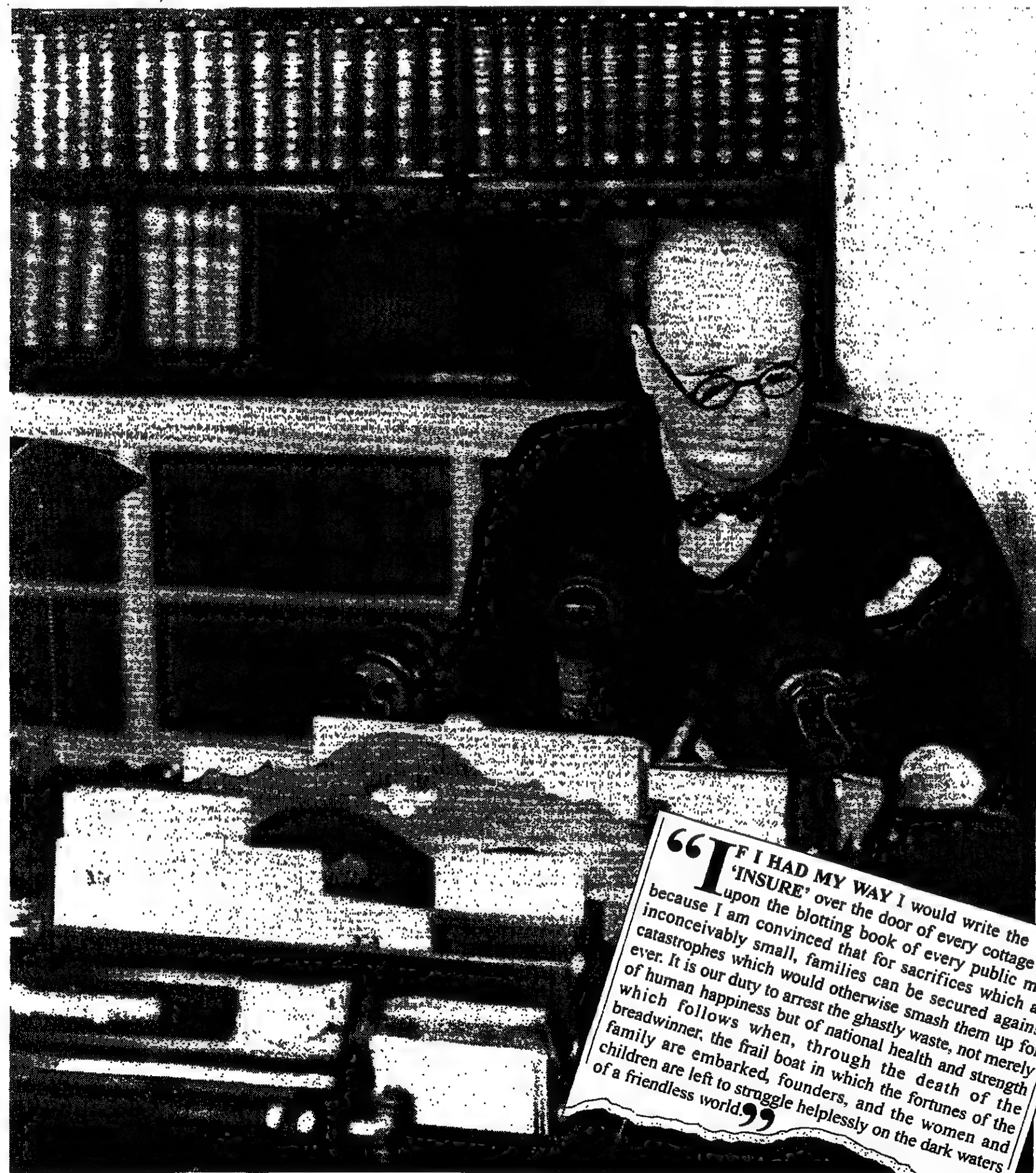
Royal Air Force Museum, Grahame Park Way, Hendon: Peace and the Future, a

musical and theatrical production commissioned by the Anne Frank Educational Trust for children aged 9-13. Presented for the first time to celebrate VE-Day, the story is about two young girls living 50 years apart. Tickets are sold out but there may be some returns. At 5pm, peace balloons will be released. (0181) 950 6476.

Thameside VE-Day: Family entertainment at Hay's Galleria with the nearby HMS Belfast (see below) and Churchill's Britain at War Museum joining the festivities. The programme includes a lunchtime concert by the 20-piece Big Swing Band, a display of 1940s dancing by Le Roc dance troupe, songs from the 1940s, tap dancing and comedy plus acrobatics from the Cheeky Chappies. Hay's Galleria, Tooley Street, SE1.

HMS Belfast, near Tower Bridge: Family fun day with tug of war, King Neptune, sea shanties. Entry is free for children, but a donation would be appreciated. (0171) 407 6434.

VE-Day Park Event: Free entertainments, funfair and fireworks. Ravenscourt Park, west London. 2-9.30pm. Fireworks start at 8.40pm.



"If I had my way I would write the word 'INSURE' over the door of every cottage and because I am convinced that for sacrifices which are inconceivably small, families can be secured against catastrophes which would otherwise smash them up for ever. It is our duty to arrest the ghastly waste, not merely of human happiness but of national health and strength which follows when, through the death of the breadwinner, the frail boat in which the fortunes of the family are embarked, founders, and the women and children are left to struggle helplessly on the dark waters of a friendless world."

His way then can be your way now.

A great believer in the power and the necessity of life assurance, Sir Winston is on record as saying every family should be protected.

He also had faith in the security of one of the great life companies too. He entrusted Great Britain's negotiable securities to Sun Life of Canada's vaults in Montreal for safe keeping for the duration of the war.

With assets under management in excess of £48,000 million at the end of 1994, Sun Life Assurance Company of Canada is one of the world's largest and strongest life assurance companies with over

100 years experience of investment on behalf of its policyholders. Leading credit rating agencies have awarded the Company their highest possible ratings for financial strength - 'AAA' from Standard & Poor's and 'A++' from A.M. Best & Co. On average, during 1994, the Company paid out over £6 million in benefits to policyholders, beneficiaries and depositors every day of the year.

Today, Sun Life of Canada has never been more committed to the business of protecting and securing families: just as Sir Winston would have wished.



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THEIR memorial is a historic building (now the Naval Club) in London which the Wave Heritage Trust has been formed to preserve.

IF you were in the RNVR or have a relation or friend who died or served in the War will you support the WAVE HERITAGE TRUST?

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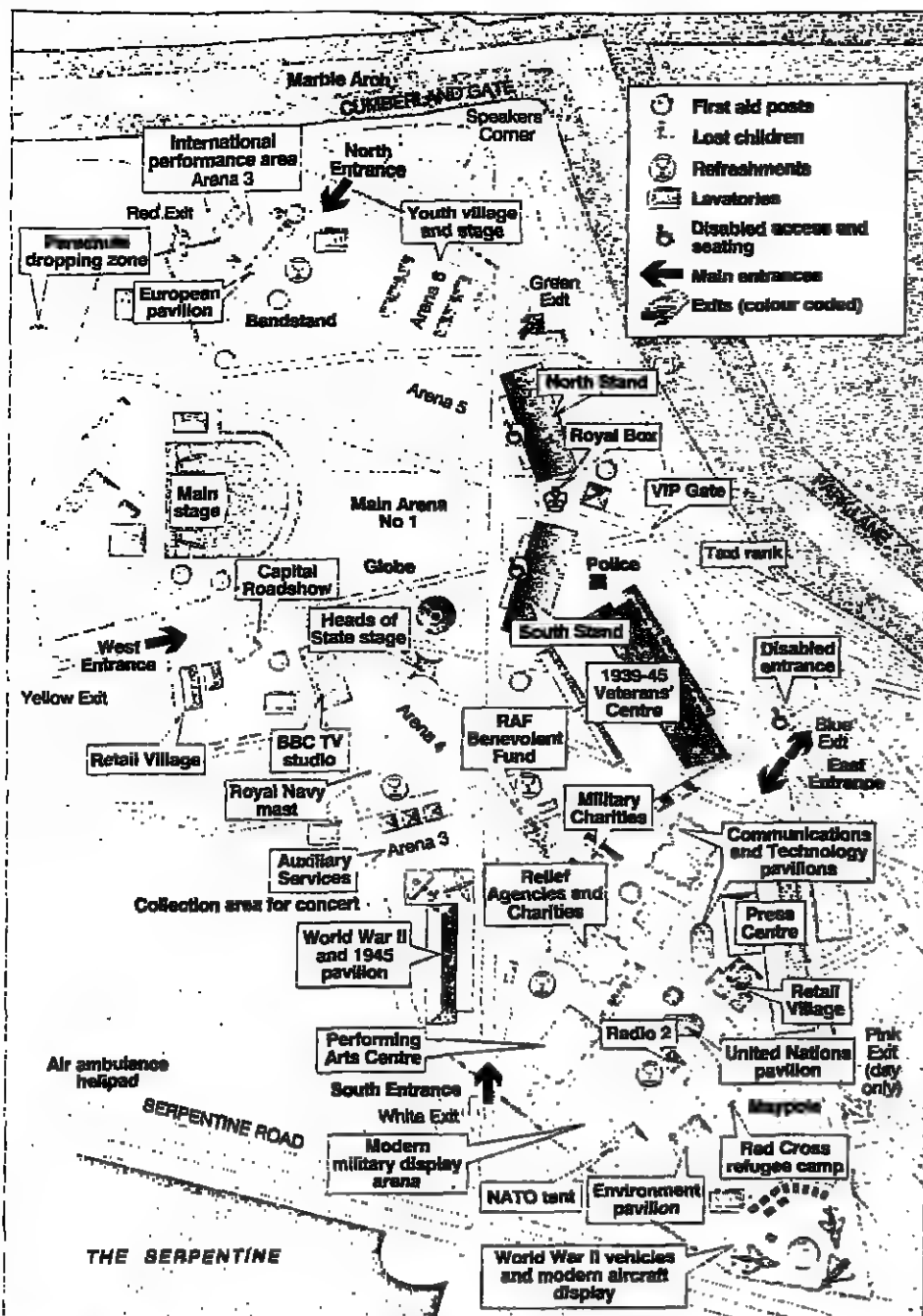
YOU will then be sent details of other ways of preserving the Memorial, and visiting it.

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HYDE PARK CELEBRATIONS

Tony Garnett



London remembers with fireworks, concerts and displays

Guide to weekend's events

By MARIANNE CURPHEY

THOUSANDS of street parties and hundreds of concerts are being planned to mark Britain's celebrations of VE-Day this weekend, but the focus will be the bands, exhibitions and displays in Hyde Park.

Entry to the site is free. The gates open to the public at 10am today, tomorrow and Monday, and close at 5.30pm tomorrow, and 5pm today and Monday.

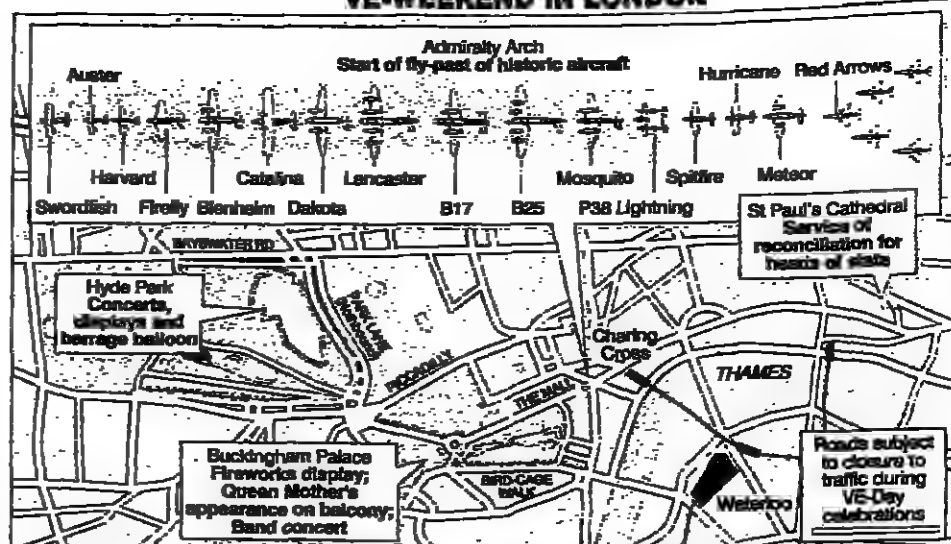
Tomorrow, the Youth and International Day, standing room in the arena is available free to the public throughout the day. Tickets are required, however, for the Royal British Legion concert today and the VE night concert on Monday. Although thousands of tickets have been allocated to veterans' organisations, a handful of returns may still be available by telephoning (0181) 204 1234.

Visitors are being encouraged to use public transport to and from Hyde Park and other locations. There is no additional parking available in or around the park. The usual parking facilities in the immediate area will be suspended, with restrictions enforced; this includes the closure of the NCP car park in Hyde Park. Extra taxi-ranks will be provided in Park Lane. Motorists should avoid Hyde Park and St James's Park.

Police say access roads to The Mall, Hyde Park and St Paul's Cathedral will be closed for security reasons and motorists should plan their routes

VE-WEEKEND IN LONDON

Tony Garnett



carefully (see accompanying map).

London Underground plans to operate a full train service throughout the weekend, with services extended each night to 1am. All Second World War veterans will be able to travel free, and there will be a special souvenir ticket on sale to the public offering three days of travel at a special rate.

The timetable for tomorrow starts at 11am with a service of reconciliation and hope at St Paul's Cathedral, attended by the Royal Family, heads of state from 50 countries, and Second World War veterans.

At 3.15pm, heads of state, The Prince and Princess of Wales, Prince Harry, the Princess Royal and the Prime Minister will arrive at Hyde

Park, followed by the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh. A reconciliation ceremony, for ticket-holders only, begins at 4.15pm, and 30 minutes later the Queen will leave and Prince Edward will meet war veterans. At 5.45pm the Prime Minister and Prince Edward will leave.

The public will be able to see the ceremony from near the south stand in the park.

On Monday, a band concert with audience singing, led by Dame Vera Lynn, Sir Harry Secombe and Cliff Richard will be held in front of Buckingham Palace. Admission to the forecourt is for veterans with tickets only, but the public will be able to watch the concert free from The Mall.

At 12.30pm the Queen

Mother will walk on to the balcony at Buckingham Palace where she took her place 50 years ago to wave to crowds in the Mall. A minute later she will be joined by the Queen and Princess Margaret.

At 12.45pm there will be a flypast over central London by historic warplanes in the following order: Swordfish, Auster, Harvard, Spitfire, Lancaster, B17, B25, Mosquito, P38 Lightning, Spitfire, Hurricane, and Meteor, with nine Red Arrows in a V-formation bringing up the rear. The best viewing spot will be in The Mall, as the aircraft will fly from Admiralty Arch, near Trafalgar Square, down the Mall and over Buckingham Palace. A

spectacular daylight fireworks display near the Palace is scheduled for 12.55pm. The final big event of the weekend celebrations is the Queen's visit to Hyde Park at 8.30pm. A two-minute nationwide silence will begin at 8.38pm, followed by the lighting of the Hyde Park beacon and the simultaneous lighting across the country of beacons, bonfires, and the staging of street parties to mark 50 years of peace and reconciliation.

At 9pm the Queen will start a laser show and a huge concert will begin in the park, featuring Dame Vera Lynn and the original Tiller Girls. At 9.45pm there will be a second fireworks display in Hyde Park, and at 10.30pm the Queen will leave.

A 70ft flower-covered globe will feature in the ceremonies tomorrow, and visitors will be able to trace the history of the wartime campaigns that led to VE-Day in covered pavilions. Other displays will highlight life on the home front.

For wartime veterans wishing to make contact with former colleagues, there will be an even larger reception pavilion than was provided for the 1994 D-Day events.

The Grosvenor House Hotel on Park Lane is running an exhibition of photographs portraying the brighter side of life during the war. *Amazing Grace: Social Life in London 1939-1945* runs until June 3 and shows how the people of London kept their sense of fun and style even when they were faced with deprivation and destruction.



Mike Moore/TODAY Newspaper



All-star cricket at The Oval

HERE is a list of weekend events in and around London:

Today

London: The Sunbury Cricket Match. The Oval. A star cast including Gary Lineker, Linford Christie, Peter Scudamore, Bill Wyman, Roger Daltrey, Rory Bremner and David Essex will play England team members. Tickets (0171) 582 7764.

London: VE-Day Celebration Concert, with The World

Choir, Hyde Park. Dame Vera Lynn, Elaine Paige, Ute Lemper and Cliff Richard are among the performers. Seating is limited but there is free access for those who do not wish to sit. (0171) 973 0633.

London: Thames Match, River Thames. Sailing barges will sail from the Lower Hope Point to the Clarendon Hotel, Gravesend. (01273) 890328.

Northamptonshire: VE-Day Golden Jubilee Commemorations, Festival Hall, Corby, until Monday. (01563) 402233.

Essex: VE-Day Commemorations, Colchester, until May 8. (01206) 282249.

Monday

Nationwide: Chain of beacons and bonfires; street parties.

London: VE-Day events, Winston Churchill's Britain at War Theme Museum. (0171) 403 3171. *Anne Frank in the World*, RAF Museum, free. (0181) 205 2266.

Essex: VE celebrations, Harlow park. (01279) 446701.

Flag firm maintains the royal standard

JOANNA CROSS of Black and Edgington, the Queen's flagmaker, put the final touches yesterday to a new flag for Dominica, the Windward island. The flag will fly with those of the other Commonwealth nations in Parliament Square today as the VE-Day events get under way.

The company, which dates back to 1795, has seen a fall stretch for weeks to meet the extra demand in the run-up to scores of events and parties around the country this weekend.

Among its main orders have been two sets of 60 heads-of-state flags measuring 9ft by 6ft for Hyde Park and 100 large Union Flags for



Joanna Cross finishes off the Dominican flag

The Mall and the Queen Victoria Memorial Gardens in London.

Nick Farley, manager of the flags and textiles division of the firm, based in Orpington, Kent, said he hopes the resurgence in patriotism evident in the past few weeks will continue.

He said that the company has sold out of its 6ft by 3ft Union Flags. "This week we've probably sold 150 of them. Bearing in mind they are £38 a time, it is clear people don't seem to mind the cost as long as they are getting a good-quality flag," he said.

THE SERVICE BENEVOLENT FUNDS JOINT VE/VJ DAY APPEAL

Please honour the dead by helping those who served

The Royal and Merchant Navies, the Army and the Royal Air Force Benevolent Funds each care for those who served. Please help them in this special year of remembrance, fifty years on from the end of World War II. Many of the dependants of those killed, as well as an increasing number of survivors and their families, still need your help. They ask you today for your generosity—they did not fail you—please do not fail them.

A donation now and a legacy later will be received with gratitude.

We will never forget you



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Rising popularity of outspoken critic in ranks of Russian army heightens Kremlin unease

General awaits call to arms

WITH a mixture of pride and nostalgia, Russians will turn out next week to applaud their armed forces, 50 years after the men and women of the Soviet military stormed Berlin.

However, when General Aleksandr Lebed sees the massed ranks of infantry, he will be contemplating not just the Red Army's finest hour. The outspoken general believes that the military saved the nation from the Nazis and that it is, moreover, the only institution capable of saving Russia from itself.

As commander of the 14th Army based in Moldova, General Lebed, 44, may be a relatively minor figure in military terms, but the paratrooper, Afghan war hero and would-be politician is easily the most popular soldier in Russia's two million man army and is enjoying growing

MOSCOW FILE

by RICHARD BEESTON



leaders to attack pro-democracy demonstrators and instead came to the assistance of President Yeltsin, who was besieged in the White House.

But as General Lebed's popularity soared, helped in large part by a slick personal publicity operation, he has increasingly come into conflict with the Kremlin, which mistrusts his high profile and fears his influence over the army. The general expounds on every key issue facing Russia and usually strikes a popular chord.

He condemns Moscow for "running after Western aid like a goat chasing a carrot", promises to stamp out crime and corruption, and even hints that he could put right most of the country's ills in three days at the helm.

Under normal circumstances, President Yeltsin could afford to ignore his officer's insubordination, were it not for General Lebed's stinging criticisms of the conduct of the disastrous campaign in Chechnya and the proximity of presidential elections scheduled for next year.

Whether General Lebed will be seeking election has yet to be seen. Pavel Felgenhauer, the defence correspondent of the Daily Segodnya newspaper, pointed out this week that one thing is certain: "The Russian Army will be parading on Victory Day not to salute Yeltsin, but to show the world it is still there."

support among civilians. An unabashed fan of Augusto Pinochet, Chile's former leader, General Lebed said recently: "I joined the armed forces 25 years ago and still love military service and want to carry on. But these are troubled times. Everything is so confused you can't tell military issues from political ones."

Few soldiers are as well placed to judge as the general. In August 1991, when he was a paratroop commander, he refused to obey orders from the communist coup

Guard for Grozny marchers

WHILE soldiers around Europe must be thoroughly bored with the endless drill, polish and other preparations needed for military parades, they should consider themselves lucky.

For the unfortunate garrison of Russian troops stationed in Grozny, the Chechen capital, the V-Day celebrations are going ahead for next week in spite of an upsurge in fighting around the city. The parade

promises to be a surreal event as some soldiers will march in the devastated city centre, while the rest will have to protect them from Chechen snipers.

The irony is that Grozny emerged relatively unscathed from the Second World War and, as Chechens are quick to remind newcomers, the Germans caused far less damage when they invaded the Caucasus than the Russians did this year.



General Lebed, who believes the army can save Russia from itself

Spring brings ordeal for new conscripts

WHILE most Russians are celebrating the end of their six-month winter, for hundreds of thousands of teenage boys spring heralded a different ordeal.

The annual conscription of 18-year-olds is now under way, causing panic among high school pupils, who with the help of parents and friends are desperately trying to find a way out of their two-year duty. Military service used to be regarded as an honour, but there is now little incentive to serve in the armed forces.

Conditions for conscripts are generally appalling, with low pay, bad food and regular accounts of bullying. Since the start of the conflict in Chechnya, not to mention the ongoing fighting in Tajikistan, there is also the very real danger of being killed or wounded.

According to experts, there are several ways to escape conscription: never answer any post and if necessary, move home; bribe your recruiting officer to remove your name from the list (the going rate is about £4,375); bribe a doctor to give you a medical deferment, or go abroad.

This year, however, the authorities have promised to crack down on dodgers, estimated at nearly 12,000 last year, and President Yeltsin has increased military service by six months to beef up the thinning ranks.

UN and Croatia dispute alleged rights violations

FROM ANTHONY LOYD IN ZAGREB AND JOEL BRAND IN SARAJEVO

AS CROAT troops consolidated their positions around the Serbian enclave in western Slavonia, a new and damaging dispute erupted between the United Nations peacekeepers and Croatian authorities over allegations of human rights violations in the newly occupied territory.

The UN Security Council had condemned Croat excesses and stunned foreign diplomats in Croatia by calling for a return to the status quo of May 1, before the Croat offensive.

"The UN is living like Alice in Wonderland, totally disconnected from the reality of the situation," a senior Western diplomat in Zagreb said.

Meanwhile UN spokesmen in the Croatian capital again condemned the actions of the victorious Croat troops, citing incidents of widespread looting of Serb houses and the separation and detention of Serb families remaining in the area.

However, independent witnesses to the action commented only on the discipline and restraint shown by Croatian forces in the area of fighting, which the UN left on Thursday.

"There was no sign of looting," a foreign journalist said. "By Balkan standards, the aftermath of the action was exemplary in its evenhandedness. The Serbs seemed surprised by how well they were treated."

The UN reports, which Chris Gunnes, its spokesman in Zagreb, said had "their authenticity discussed at the highest level", seemed based on little more than the hearsay accounts of European Community monitors present in western Slavonia.

In particular, they cited the rounding up of Serb civilians and soldiers late on Thursday by the Croats, before the

detention of the men in two separate holding centres, as evidence of human rights violations.

Yet at the detention centres the Serbs received food and medical attention and were visited by the International Committee for the Red Cross. "There is no evidence of human rights abuses yet the UN is going well over the top here," the diplomatic source said amid a flurry of Croatian government denials.

The UN has often discredited factions among the Balkan combatants to dampen their belligerence and strengthen credibility in its own prepossession.

Ironically, western Slavonia, the scene of many Serb atrocities in 1991, was the only Serb-held area of Croatia where the December peace accord of last year — that opened routes for trade and travel between the two sides — had worked.

Last Friday a Croatian man slit the throat of a Serb at a fuel station on the crucial motorway that bisects the enclave. The Croat said he had recognised the Serb as the killer of his brother in 1991. In response, the Serb's brother killed and wounded several Croats with a Kalashnikov. Serb forces then closed the motorway, initiating the offensive by the Croats.

Yesterday, rebel Serb gunners unleashed a furious artillery barrage on a Croat-held pocket just inside Bosnia, possibly in retaliation for losses across the border in Croatia this week. In three hours the two sides fired about 2,000 shells around the northern, Serb-held town of Brcko, a Bosnian Croat army officer told the UN, which confirmed an unusually intense artillery attack in the area. Apparently, most fell on the Croat-held Orasje pocket inside Bosnia.



Novelist put on trial in Istanbul

FROM ANDREW FINKEL IN ISTANBUL

YASHAR KEMAL, Turkey's most distinguished novelist, went on trial yesterday charged with disseminating propaganda aimed at destroying the integrity of the State. The charges refer to an article in the German magazine Der Spiegel, in which he attacked army brutality in the Kurdish southeast.

Mr Kemal, 73, explained before a crowded Istanbul court that his purpose had been to preserve the friendship between Turk and Kurd for the day when "the bloody and dirty war" in the south-east came to an end. The author, charged under a watered-down version of the Prevention of Terrorism Act, accused the prosecutor of interfering with the integrity of his writing by not bothering to read the offending piece.

The trial, which was adjourned until July 12, is the latest embarrassment for the Government, which is under pressure from European allies to improve its rights record.

Gangsters led luxury jail life

FROM JOHN PHILLIPS IN ROME

JAILED gangsters of the Camorra, the Naples version of the Mafia, received champagne, caviar and weapons in their cells and watched women perform strip shows organised by warders, it was disclosed yesterday.

The governor of the Fuorni prison at Salerno, south of Naples, was arrested with 14 warders and they were incarcerated after being charged with organising a life of luxury for Carmine Alfieri and Pasquale Galasso, the Camorra bosses, judicial sources said.

Supergrasses, including Galasso who turned state's evidence, said that one prison officer, Michele Grimaldi, received a monthly "salary" of 4 million lire (£1,500) for providing inmates with mobile phones and knives and for organising striptease performances outside Galasso's cell window. Other warders received Rolex watches, jewels, cars and holiday homes in return for favours.

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Rattled and defensive Chirac pleads with voters to block Jospin's path to the Elysée Palace

European debate injects venom into campaign finale

FROM CHARLES BRENNER IN PARIS

THE long French election campaign closed last night in a squabble over Europe, with Jacques Chirac, the Gaullist candidate, pleading with voters to block the path of Lionel Jospin, the Socialist who has come to within striking distance of being elected President tomorrow.

"There is a real Jospin danger," M Chirac said, urging conservatives to vote. "The only question they had to decide was: 'Do the French really want to entrust the affairs of France to the hands of M Jospin and his Socialist friends for seven more years?'"

The Socialist hit back, saying: "Perhaps there is a Jospin danger, but the danger is not for France. It is for Jacques Chirac." M Jospin forecast in a four-city tour yesterday that he would follow his surprise in the first round with a new upset. "A dynamic has been created which goes far beyond the borders of political parties," he said.

M Chirac's oddly defensive plea reflected the near-panic in his camp as it has watched his lead crumble towards the 50 per cent mark from a ten-point margin after the first round on April 23, according to private polls. Yesterday his supporters struggled to handle the fallout from an overture by M Chirac towards Euro sceptics which may have won some votes but opened him to attack from M Jospin.

The fuss centred on a sudden promise by M Chirac to call a referendum on the future shape of Europe after the EU Inter-Governmental Conference next year.

Although M Chirac diluted his idea yesterday, M Jospin and his team, staunchly committed to European union, tore into him for toying with the future of France and for reverting to his old image as an unpredictable populist. "One has to wonder about the stability of M Chirac's decision-making," said M Jospin. "I do not think that you have to question the French on Mas-

tricht at every step." Jacques Delors, the elder statesman of M Jospin's campaign, mocked M Chirac as a "weather vane" and said he was "bad for France. Chirac used to change once a year. Now he's changing every day," he said. The Gaullist denounced the former EU Commission President as "indecent".

Such name-calling has marked the final days of the most domestically focused presidential campaign for decades. The eruption of Europe as a last-minute theme only highlighted the extraordinary absence until now from the campaign of any debate among mainstream candi-

general election to try to ensure a parliamentary majority. Because the Gaullists and their Centre Right allies won an overwhelming majority in 1993 and 60 per cent of the country voted for conservatives last month, it would seem unlikely that voters would give parliamentary power to the Left. That would then lead to another unsatisfactory period of "cohabitation" like the one now ending.

M Jospin, however, says that if voters pick him, they will also return a parliament favourable to him, as they did when M Mitterrand won the presidency in 1981 and 1988. Either way, M Jospin would start out, on taking office around May 15, by appointing a caretaker administration probably headed by Martine Aubry, M Delors' popular daughter. M Chirac has promised not to dissolve parliament but to work with the existing majority.

Whether France opts for a President Jospin or a President Chirac, the new Government is expected to draw heavily on younger politicians. Only a few senior ministers are expected to come from the ranks of the old guard who sat in the three Socialist and two Gaullist Governments of the past decade.

As M Chirac led his final campaign rally in Lyons last night, few politicians were putting any trust in the polls, given their failure to signal the winning order in the first round. The electorate has rarely been more volatile, after voting in record numbers for protest candidates in the first round.

Some are betting that the result could be as close as the 1.62 percentage-point margin that sent Valéry Giscard d'Estaing to the Elysée Palace in 1974 instead of François Mitterrand. In 1981, M Mitterrand reversed the order, winning by 3.6 points. In 1988, he widened the gap, beating M Chirac by eight points.



Either Alain Juppé, the Gaullist, or Martine Aubry, the Socialist daughter of Jacques Delors, is likely to be asked to be Prime Minister

Juppé certain to be rewarded for loyalty

FROM CHARLES BRENNER IN PARIS

IF JACQUES CHIRAC wins tomorrow it is considered certain that his choice for Prime Minister will be Alain Juppé, the loyal lieutenant who has proved himself a key figure in the campaign and as an internationally admired Foreign Minister.

The word "brilliant" usually accompanies references to M Juppé, 49. The son of a Gascony farmer, M Juppé has been M Chirac's chief collaborator for almost two decades and interim leader of the Gaullist party since November. At the Ecole Nationale d'Administration, the post-graduate nursery of the governing class, fellow students were so dazzled by the Juppé brain they nicknamed him "Amstrad". As Foreign Minister under Edouard Balladur, the tall, bald, brisk-mannered M Juppé has earned praise from such various sources as President Mitterrand, Douglas Hurd and the Serbian leaders whom he browbeat over Bosnia. The British Foreign Secretary calls his French colleague a star. M Mitterrand is impressed with the way M Juppé has run France's foreign business, notably winning a good compromise on the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT)

world trade accord, while avoiding the clashes that marred the "cohabitation" government of the 1980s.

M Juppé has succeeded in his months as M Chirac's campaign leader in softening his image as the epitome of the stately technocrats who dominate the public administration. However those on the wrong side of his formidable mind often depict him as intemperate.

M Balladur, whose defeat was clinched by M Juppé's success in rallying the Chirac loyalists, talks acidly of his minister in private. Lionel Jospin said he had watched M Juppé progress since he entered public life as a Paris city councillor in 1978. "He has a formidable arrogance, verging on disdain that shocks even his allies," M Jospin said. "I thought he had changed, but he hasn't."

M Juppé is expected, if appointed, to draw up a government list dominated by a younger generation. Top jobs will go to those who stuck with M Chirac. These include Alain Madelin, the business affairs minister, Jacques Toubon, the Culture Minister and Philippe Séguin, the parliamentary Speaker.



Daughter of Delors is tipped for premiership

FROM ADAM SAGE IN PARIS

SOCIALIST Party members are in no doubt who they would like to see appointed as French Prime Minister. "Lionel to the Elysée, Martine to the Matignon," they have shouted at campaign rallies.

In reply, Martine Aubry, 44, has offered only smiles, maintaining a silence that respects constitutional convention but does nothing to dampen speculation.

Commentators are convinced that she had only one serious rival for the premiership, her father, Jacques Delors, the former President of the European Commission. Since he appears to have ruled out taking the job, Mme Aubry is seen as a certainty to succeed Edouard Balladur in the Matignon if M Jospin wins.

Should Mme Aubry be appointed, it will complete a rise of bewildering speed. A product of the Ecole Nationale d'Administration that forms much of the French élite, she was, until 1991, a high-flying civil servant and then an industrialist, whose political experience was limited to the lessons handed down by her father.

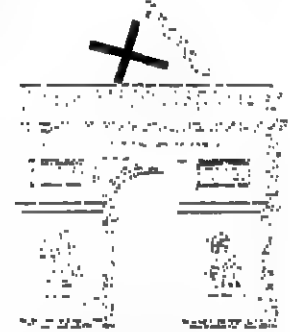
In that year, however, President Mitterrand plucked her from relative

obscurity to become Employment Minister. Amid the wreckage of the last years of Socialist government, Mme Aubry was one of the few successes, earning a measure of personal popularity that was boosted by her subsequent campaigns for the unemployed.

Appointed spokesman for M Jospin at the start of his campaign in February, she has again proved to be a valuable asset, providing not just a fresh face but also surprising pugnacity. Indeed, with her father, she has been largely responsible for transforming the Socialist candidate's image.

Yet doubts remain. Married to an accountant with whom she has a daughter, Mme Aubry has never run for office, saying she wanted to spare her family the stress. Opponents say her reluctance to go before the voters is indicative of a fragile ego that would cope badly with the rough and tumble of the premiership.

For his part, M Delors seems to want to play a role as the wise old man of politics, outside the Cabinet. But there is a chance that he could be tempted by the post of Foreign Minister, raising the prospect of a Government led by a daughter-father team.



FRENCH ELECTION

dates over France's future in the Union or its role in the world. "It is as if the whole election is being held in a vacuum," *Le Monde* said.

Each candidate has tried to demonise the other as perilous for France. While M Jospin, 57, has painted M Chirac, 62, as an unpredictable man of the past and a hardline conservative, the Gaullist has been busy predicting chaos should another Socialist succeed President Mitterrand.

Philippe Séguin, a Chirac lieutenant, said that France would succumb to Italian-style paralysis. The argument is based on M Jospin's need, if elected, to call an immediate

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Oklahoma body hunt called off

Washington: The search for victims in the Oklahoma City bombing ended yesterday as rescue teams gathered for a final memorial to the dead (Tom Rhodes writes).

After two weeks of digging through the rubble of the Alfred Murrah Building, firefighters walked out of the debris for the last time. The explosion killed 167 people, including two adults who have not been found and 19 children. Among the last bodies to be removed were those of three babies who had been in the children's day care centre on the second floor.

Offensive ends

Ankara: Turkey announced the end of the six-week offensive against rebel Kurds in northern Iraq which strained relations with the West. A statement said: "All troops have returned home." (Reuters)

Briton stabbed

Maputo: Polly Gaster, 51, an English director of the Mozambican government bookshop, was in a stable condition after being stabbed here. Police say that there was no political motive. (Reuters)

Bank head dies

Washington: Lewis Preston, president of the World Bank and former chief executive of J. P. Morgan and Co, has died. Mr Preston, 68, had cancer and was due to retire at the end of this month. (Reuters)

Poll promised

Alma Ata: President Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan has said that he will hold a referendum in August to change the national constitution and to pave the way for elections to a new parliament. (Reuters)

Outlook poor

Rostov-on-Don: Thousands of passengers were stranded when southern Russia's largest airport here was shut down for safety reasons because it had failed to pay for its weather forecasts. (AP)

Russians break Chechen truce

FROM RICHARD BEESTON IN MOSCOW

RUSSIA yesterday broke its unilateral ceasefire in Chechnya when it launched punitive air and artillery bombardments against a suspected rebel stronghold south of Grozny, the capital. Witnesses said that helicopter gunships

and heavy artillery blasted the village of Bamut in the early hours yesterday after a week of intensive attacks by separatists against Russian troops.

The retaliation had been predicted, but nevertheless threatened to make an embarrassing backdrop to next week's VE-Day celebrations, when more than 50 world

leaders will assemble in Moscow to watch a display of military might. It also made a mockery of President Yeltsin's 14-day ceasefire, which was supposed to last another week.

The move was unlikely to quieten Chechen fighters, who have been launching several attacks a day against the Russian forces.

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Briton murdered in onslaught by Algerian militants

By Christopher Walker

ISLAMIC militants killed five more foreigners in southern Algeria yesterday, including one Briton, bringing to more than 80 the number of foreigners killed since they were first singled out by the Armed Islamic Group in 1993.

Sources close to the Algerian security forces said that about 20 Islamic gunmen attacked Alan Wilson, of Edinburgh, two Frenchmen, one Canadian, one Tunisian and an Algerian soldier as they slept in barracks at an irrigation equipment factory. They were working for an irrigation pipeline company on a special programme in the Ghardaia region and were not regular employees. Mr Wilson had been working as a specialist

on internal pipe coatings for the Algerian gas and oil industry for five weeks. Four Algerians in the guard unit were wounded.

According to the official APS news agency, it was later reported that three Algerian military officers were killed in the attack. Seven other workers, including another Briton, were evacuated.

The Foreign Office said yesterday: "We unreservedly condemn this outrageous attack on expatriate workers. It seems that those expatriates were being protected by Algerian military guards and we are waiting for a full report from Algerian authorities."

Britain has strongly advised its nationals against going to

Algeria and has reduced its diplomatic representation to two officials. It is believed that about 280 Britons remain.

France condemned the killing as "an odious criminal act". A Foreign Ministry spokesman repeated an earlier request for all French nationals whose presence is not required to return home.

A spokeswoman for the American company Bechtel, for which Mr Wilson was working as a sub-contractor on behalf of the Berkshire-based Bredero Price, said: "This is the first such incident that they have had and they are in considerable shock."

Yesterday's murders were a blow to the Algerian Government, which recently had boasted of success in its three-year civil war after killing hundreds of militants in security operations. Only last month, the authorities announced a sweeping package of measures designed to protect workers in the oil and gas industry in the Sahara desert. The militant Islamic leadership, fighting to turn the State into a revolutionary Muslim republic like Iran, is convinced that by driving out foreign expertise it can cripple the Government by depriving the exchequer of its economic lifeline.

Since the campaign against foreigners was launched, there has been a exodus and few of those who remain have their families with them. Most live in heavily guarded hotels or compounds. The reduced number of diplomats are closely guarded.

The murders were seen in diplomatic circles as part of a deliberate attempt by the militants to reassert their power by terrifying outsiders and the native population after the recent military campaign against them. One Algerian newspaper reported that up to 2,800 Muslim rebels had died. Many of the militants are said to be as young as 15.



Guardians David Jones, of The Welsh Guards, chats with a police victim yesterday outside a hospital opposite the headquarters in Lobito of British troops in Angola. A United Nations envoy said

Angolan foes plan talks

yesterday that President dos Santos and Jonas Savimbi, the leader of the Unita rebels, will meet today for the first

time in six years, raising hopes for talks to end Africa's longest war. The President failed to appear on Thursday

and yesterday for their meeting in Lusaka, the Zambian capital, casting doubt on an accord signed last November. However, an aide said he would be in Lusaka today. (Reuters)

Moscow summit will highlight deteriorating relations with US

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON

PRESIDENT CLINTON flies to Russia on Monday for two-day visit that is supposed to celebrate the Allied victory over Nazi Germany 50 years ago, but will in fact highlight a sharp deterioration in American-Russian relations.

Giddy post-Cold War talk of a Washington-Moscow partnership to solve the world's problems has long gone, replaced by President Yeltsin's warnings of a "cold peace" and a frosty new American policy towards Russia of "pragmatic engagement".

Arguments over Nato's expansion, Russia's suppression of Chechnia and Moscow's determination to sell nuclear reactors to Iran will dominate potentially the most contentious summit since the Cold War's end. Only on Nato enlargement does the White House expect progress. With presidential elections in Amer-

ica and Russia next year, both leaders must be seen to be fighting for their national interests and neither can risk big concessions.

Mr Clinton is being criticised at home for his decision to go to Moscow, at all, especially as he extracted no concessions in return for this tacit endorsement of Mr Yeltsin's save a cosmetic three-week Chechenian ceasefire. As recently as February, Warren Christopher, US Secretary of State, said the President would stay away unless Russia abandoned its scorched-earth policy in Chechnia.

In the end, Mr Clinton overruled his advisers, saying his absence from the VE-Day celebrations would gravely offend a nation that lost 27 million people in the Second World War. But the White House is so concerned about the potential for embarrass-

ment that it has extracted assurances that the Kremlin will spring no nasty surprises during the summit and that no soldiers from the Afghan or Chechenian wars will march in the Red Square parade Mr Clinton is to review.

Mr Christopher predicts "no great series of breakthroughs", but American and Russian negotiators have drafted a joint statement announcing a new security dialogue between Russia and Nato to ease Moscow's fears about the alliance's eastward expansion. Mr Yeltsin might even reverse Russia's refusal last December to join the Partnership for Peace, the American-inspired programme offering all former Warsaw Pact nations close co-operation with Nato.

Mr Christopher said Mr Clinton would restate America's opposition to Russia's

proposed sale of two nuclear reactors to Iran and give Mr Yeltsin intelligence information indicating that Iran is bent on developing nuclear weapons. He said a Russian offer merely to withhold gas centrifuges capable of producing weapons-grade uranium would be insufficient.

Last Sunday Mr Clinton sought to strengthen his case by announcing a United States trade embargo on Iran, but Washington has made such a fuss about the \$1 billion (£618 million) deal that Russian nationalists would accuse Mr Yeltsin of capitulation if he cancelled it now.

Mr Clinton will also denounce the Chechenian conflict. Mr Christopher said that Russia's integration into the Group of Seven industrialised nations and other Western institutions was at stake in the talks.

Marcoses make poll a family affair

FROM JAMES PRINGLE IN BINANGONAN, THE PHILIPPINES

LONG hair hanging forwards over a pudgy, yet somehow familiar, face creased in a smile, he leant over the side of the open, slow-moving vehicle, exchanging brief handshakes with grinning people.

Perhaps most Filipinos thought they had said goodbye forever to the Marcos clan after Ferdinand Marcos, the late President, was toppled in 1986. But as voters prepare for Monday's elections for the Senate and House of Representatives, Ferdinand Marcos II, the 37-year-old son of the dictator, is on the campaign trail.

Better known by the nickname Bong Bong and for his playboy past, Mr Marcos has apparently turned serious. "We have got to take pride in ourselves as Filipinos," he told an enthusiastic crowd. "We must not forget what happened to Flor or the fact that the present administration did not lift a finger to help her."

The crowd roars its agreement. Flor Contemplacion was the Filipina maid hanged in Singapore in March for a double murder she did not deny. Most Filipinos believe she was innocent. For the opposition, seeking an issue with which to tackle President Ramos, the case was a windfall.

"Marcos Junior has surprised us," said one Western diplomat. "He had a reputation as a spoilt brat and his first congressional term was a disaster, but somehow he has succeeded in remaking himself."

Imelda Marcos, his mother, is also running, although for the House of Representatives from her home province of Leyte. Though she is disqualified from office for failing to satisfy a residency requirement — which may take up to three years to resolve — she will probably win.

Whatever the election result, it seems that Filipinos have not put the Marcos clan behind them just yet.

Muslim cleric calls for editor's death

By Tunku Varadarajan

THE editor of a newspaper in Mauritius is seeking British support after a death sentence was issued against him by an ultra-orthodox Muslim cleric.

Namassivayam Ramalingum, 37, left Mauritius days after Imam Haroun issued a fatwa calling on "faithful servants of God" to kill him for "giving grave offence to Islam". Mr Ramalingum is the editor of *L'Independant*, which he founded 18 months ago, and has a reputation as a crusader against corruption in the Government, businesses, and the media.

He incurred the wrath of the imam in March when he reprinted an article entitled "The Life and Works of the Prophet Muhammad" from the Parisian weekly *Le Point*. Yesterday, he described the essay as "analytical and inoffensive" and pointed out that the article appeared in *Le Point* last October. He said:



Ramalingum: seeking support in Britain

"That magazine is freely available in Mauritius, yet no-one said a word until we decided to reprint it."

L'Independant was forced to close after threats directed at its offices but Mr Ramalingum will return to Mauritius tomorrow in an attempt to relaunch the newspaper.

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Our debt to tyranny's opponents

Jonathan Sacks on the lessons of Britain's heroism

The celebration of VE-Day this year will be more than an act of collective memory. It should remind us of the moral necessity of memory itself. Without it there is too much danger that wars are fought in vain.

For those who lived through the war, this weekend's events need no justification. They will relive the scenes of thanksgiving 50 years ago, and the sense of relief that a conflict so long and costly was nearing its end. They will mourn those who did not return, and look back with pride and grief, recalling events which left an indelible imprint on their lives.

It is for those born after the war that the case for memory needs to be made. For them, the day evokes no personal experience, and its meaning is only vaguely understood. A survey of a group of Britain's schoolchildren, published this week, showed that four in ten did not know what VE-Day stood for. Six in ten did not know what the Holocaust was.

There are those who argue that this is as it should be. We should, they say, bury the past and let it fade with dignity into oblivion. Dwelling on Britain's heroism a half-century ago can only distract us from the quite different problems of today. This, I believe, fails to understand the significance of national remembering.

The most important gift one generation can give to the next is the knowledge of the journey those before us took, and the sacrifices they had to make, to bring us to where we are. Without that knowledge, we travel blindly. If we forget what our parents fought for, we may have to fight for it again. Hindsight is the necessary tutor of foresight.

The Second World War was the bloodiest conflict in history. By its end, 55 million people had died. Twenty million lost their homes and became refugees. And this mere 26 years after the Treaty of Versailles had sought to create a permanent peace.

There are battles which in retrospect seem tragically unnecessary. They are conflicts of might against might, shifting positions in the balance of power. Driven by aggression, fuelled by hostility, they achieve little but a legacy of death, resentment and a desire for revenge.

The Second World War was not of this kind. In the years that have passed it has grown ever clearer that this was a necessary moral confrontation. It was only as the war neared its end that Allied troops discovered the true nature of the regime against which they were fighting.

In April 1945 British troops entered the concentration camp at Bergen-Belsen. There they saw a sight which ever since has transformed our understanding of the boundaries of evil. Before them lay a mountain of unburied corpses. 13,000 men and women beaten, starved or shot to death. The 40,000 prisoners who remained were emaciated almost beyond recognition. Liberated, they continued to die. It was a vision from hell. A British soldier wrote to his

wife that what he had seen was, "if it is ever necessary, an undoubted answer to those who want to know what we have been fighting for".

Reports that had been circulating for years, and had been discounted, were true. By the time the war ended, two-thirds of European Jewry had been murdered, not as combatants nor as the accidental casualties of war but as the victims of a sustained, ruthless, systematic plan of genocide.

A guard at Auschwitz, testifying at the Nuremberg trials, explained that at the height of the "Final Solution", when the camp was turning ten thousand Jews a day into ashes, children were thrown into the furnaces alive.

There is a revisionist interpretation of history which suggests that if only Churchill had made peace with Hitler, Britain might have saved its empire. It might — but it would have lost its soul. Churchill's greatness lay not least in the fact that from the outset he realised that this was a battle for humanity itself. In 1938, when the policy of appeasement was at its height, he made a speech outlining the brutality of Nazism, and declared: "That power cannot ever be the trusted friend of British democracy."

He was right, and each of us today has reason to be thankful for the courage of those who responded to his call and for more than a year stood alone against tyranny. There can be no doubt what would have happened without this country's heroism. I can still recall the tremor I felt reading for the first time the minutes of the Wannsee Conference of 1942 in which Heydrich outlined his plans for the Final Solution, including the 330,000 Jews of Britain.

It is not Jews alone who must remember the Holocaust, for Jews are not the only victims of racism and the war did not end the politics of hate. Today Europe still witnesses racist, neo-Nazi and xenophobic movements and fully fledged ethnic war.

Peace and coexistence are vulnerable achievements. Their best protection is to ensure that our children never forget the cost of tyranny and the battles that had to be fought for the sake of freedom. We must remember and pass our memories on to future generations. To forget is to take the unforgivable risk that the victims died in vain.

In his poem *If this is a Man*, written shortly after his liberation from Auschwitz, Primo Levi wrote: "Meditate that this came about: I commend these words to you. Carve them in your hearts! At home, in the street, going to bed, rising! Repeat them to your children..."

Telling the story from generation to generation, observing its griefs and moments of thanksgiving, pausing to pray and rededicate ourselves: these are part of having a national identity and a sense of collective moral purpose. VE-Day is as much about the future as about the past.

The author is the Chief Rabbi.

Too many Germans prefer to cast themselves as the forgotten victims of Hitler, says Roger Boyes

In Germany there seems to be some doubt, in this most sensitive of seasons, as to who actually lost the Second World War. It certainly was not the Germans: an opinion poll this week shows that 44 per cent of Germans regard their country as a victim of National Socialism and an even larger minority believes that the chapter should now be closed on the Nazi past.

The German on the *Strassenbahn* or in the bar has long subscribed to this view, which can best be summarised as: "We suffered too, so stop blaming us and let us look to the future." Now the political class, though well schooled in the Allied version of history, is beginning to take a similar line.

Respectful nods have been made in the direction of concentration camp victims, but the chief thrust of the year's awkward anniversaries has been to establish the right of Germans to mourn their own dead and create a new sense of patriotism. The February anniversary of the Dresden bombing became an occasion not only to remember the civilians killed in the fire storm but also all German victims of the war.

The German President, Professor Roman Herzog, injected into his Dresden speech several not altogether relevant references to the fate of the 11 million Germans thrown out of their homes in Eastern Europe. Newspapers are stressing how the

Germans were expelled at bayonet point from their homes in what is now Czech or Polish land. Graphic eyewitness accounts describe how German women were nailed to carts and raped by Russians, how German mothers and babies were herded into open cattle trucks. These memories continue to sour relations between Germany and its eastern neighbours.

The Germans are thus mapping out a symmetry of suffering. "We did this, but you did that." Plainly, there can be no serious comparison between Nazi atrocities and the fate of German civilians or soldiers. Even to attempt such a book-keeping operation confuses, in a perverse way, the causes and effects of the war. Given a general tendency to suppress unpleasant facts about the Third Reich, this is disturbing.

Most Germans, according to the poll by the Forsa Institute, admit that Germany caused the war (although 23 per cent blame it on "the confused international situation"; 4 per cent on

other countries; and 7 per cent on "all countries equally"). But Allied bombing of civilian targets is being styled as a heartless and unacceptable departure from the rules. Yes, there was the London Blitz and Coventry, but Hermann Goering and others had to sit in the dock for these crimes while Britons have faced no tribunal and, in the view of German conservatives, have not even begun a process of self-examination.

There is a debate in Germany, conducted with stone-grinding thoroughness, about whether to celebrate May 8 as a day of liberation or as a day of mourning for the military defeat, the mass expulsion of Germans and the subsequent division of the country.

The lines in this political battle are not drawn clearly. Two hundred conservative politicians and intellectuals have nailed their colours to the mast of "national defeat". Signatories of two open letters calling for mourning rather than celebration include a

member of Chancellor Kohl's Cabinet, an influential Christian Democrat backbencher and a leading Free Democrat. The Government, meanwhile, clings to the thesis that Germany was liberated on May 8 — although Chancellor Kohl somewhat ducks under the fence and sometimes says a word or two in favour of the national mourners.

To outsiders, the debate seems to be a borrowing from Tom Stoppard: absurd conclusions are being arrived at with perfect logic. The truth is that many Germans did feel relief on May 8, 1945, and a kind of freedom from the regime that was so plainly rotten. After the death of Hitler, there was simply no point in fighting on. But there would have been no question of "liberation" had Allied victory come earlier: the overwhelming majority of Germans were supportive of the war machine, trusted the Führer and believed in Greater Germany.

If May 1945 was a liberation for the Germans, it was an extremely nervous one — liberated, as the Polish aphorism Stanislaw Lec put it, like a tongue in a mouth without teeth. Perhaps only a minority of Germans knew about the concentration camps in 1945, but it was a substantial one (the number for Buchenwald camp was in the Weimar telephone book). For Germans, May 8 was the day of anxious waiting: how would the Allies exact their revenge?

Chancellor Kohl claims to have been blessed by "a late birth" — 15 years old at the end of the war, he was spared the choice between loyalty to Hitler and the martyrdom of resistance. This, he believes, equips him to lead Germany out of its inhibited status as a war loser to that of a victor of the Cold War.

One can hear these words, and approve: 50 years of solid democratic achievement counts for a great deal but the reordering of history is unsettling. To make victims out of the Germans downgrades the real victims. United Germany needs a new historical consensus, to reclaim its martyrs, to find war heroes and patriotic models for a new generation which already believes that collective guilt is old-fashioned and inappropriate. Germany has a right to define its history anew. But it must not be allowed to turn history upside down. From an article in the *Royal Institute of International Affairs's* *The World Today*.

What did you do in the war, Hans?

A Major victory for Labour



Faces of defeat: Conservative councillor Philip Bates, left, who lost his seat of Davyholme West to Labour, pictured with his wife, their mood reflecting the events of the evening

By nannying local councils and preventing them from overspending or overtaxing, the Tories have lost their best tactic for embarrassing Blair before the general election

It has been disaster in Dacorum, panic in Portsmouth and a rout along the Ribble. Horsham has haemorrhaged and Melton has massacred. There is apocalypse in Arun and hell in Hove, of all places. Daventry is despair, Farnham a fiasco and Mid Sussex a melt down. The whole business is absurd.

Local election results are barny. They are in no sense a comment on local government. Budget capping has steadily stripped meaning from the local franchise. As the BBC said yesterday, these elections are "fought on national issues like education and crime". Education and crime are, or were, local issues. Nor are the elections any use as an opinion poll, except to hyperventilate commentators. With just 38 per cent turning out to vote, they are hopeless tell-tales of what 80 per cent might say in a general election. They are plays-within-plays — their actors parish Pagliacci full of synthetic comedy and tragedy. Labour was wiped off the local map in reaction to Wilson's governments in the 1970s. The Tories even took Camden and Lambeth. For over a decade, the same fate has been visited on the Tories.

Yet how the chickens come home to roost. The conventional wisdom is that voters have "passed judgment on John Major's government". In a chaotic sense this is true. But it was not just the voters who withheld support: in Sussex, Kent, Cheshire, Berkshire and Essex it was canvassers, fund-raisers, even councillors who declined to run under the Conservative banner. These were not protesting about Black Wednesday or the Cabinet's European policy. They have borne up under worse disasters before. Their demoralisation was specific. It was due to the contempt shown for their work by Tory ministers. Capping has taken away their accountability, making councils

de facto agents of Whitehall. An opposition Tory councillor cannot blame his Labour group for high local taxes or cuts in roads, teaching or policing. Expenditure on these functions is determined centrally. Indeed it is hard to discern what role the Cabinet really sees for the local councils elected last Thursday.

What these elections reveal is the extent of the constitutional pollution by the Thatcher and Major local government reforms. A 38 per cent turnout is a democratic outrage, half the European average in subnational elections. A normal government would worry about this, regarding itself as custodian of the health of the unwritten constitution. The present government floats in it, using the figure to justify further centralisation of power.

In early 1991, when the Cabinet was debating the new council tax, it discussed abolishing "local" government altogether. From the lofty standpoint of the Cabinet table, the United Kingdom seemed a tiny place whose administration had room only for ministers and their appointees. Subordinate democracy was an irrelevance and an inconvenience. Councils could as well be outposts of Whitehall. In the event, the Cabinet capped the council tax and went on to cap each local budget, calculating how much each council should spend on each spending function. This degree of intervention in local democracy is unknown in any other country. Yet Mr Major did not have the courage of his colleagues' centralist convictions. He left in place elected

cheerleaders for the Labour and Liberal Democrat parties, freed of fiscal responsibility and with little to do but blame central government for service deficiencies. They have made full use of the licence. This was madness. John Major's silliest nationalisation has been the nationalisation of blame.

Simon Jenkins

The Liberal Democrats, who should have been slaughtered by Labour on Thursday, ran a single-issue campaign based on the plight of school governors, supposedly made "independent" by Kenneth Baker's 1988 Act. They are nothing of the sort. Gillian Shephard's failure to win money from the Treasury for the teachers' 2.7 per cent pay award was devastating to Tory governors. The award had been approved by Mr Clarke himself under statute, yet he allowed only 0.8 per cent on local education budgets to pay for it. Not only was such centralisation unparalleled in any other democracy, Mr Clarke also tried to pretend that any subsequent sacking of teachers was nothing to do with him. On Thursday, Tory activists replied to this avoidance of accountability in the

only way left open to them. In a better world, John Major would now gather his generals round him and prepare for war. He would tell them to devastate the "new Labour government of Britain", the quarter of the public sector administered by Labour local authorities. Faced with a similar mid-term reverse in America, Bill Clinton is "running against" the Republicans in Congress and in state and local government. With devolved powers, the latter can rightly be held answerable for the wrongs of American government.

To do likewise, Mr Major would have immediately to uncup council taxes. He could thus give the public a devastating two-year blast of Labour taxation policy in practice. He should restore the business rate to local government, and let those company directors now oiling up to Tony Blair see the real spots on his back. He should allow councils to run their own schools and colleges, set their own budgets and fight their own teachers. He should give them back the police, and savage Labour if crime rises. He should release local authority capital accounts, frozen in Whitehall, and then justly attack the condition of housing estates. He should allow councils to be hospital purchasing authorities, and then have to take the rap for waiting lists. There would be no more of Mr Major rushing to the dispatch box to explain why Mr X has just been flown from London to Leeds for an operation.

Taxes are the key to democracy. In 1988 discretionary local taxes covered 60 per cent of local spending. They now cover under 20 per cent, the rest coming from the centre. Pushing this burden back to local government would save the (Tory) government money and cost (Labour) councils dear. Labour could not complain: they want capping ended. They want more spent on public services. Let them face the electoral heat for both. If the balance of the mid-1980s were restored, Mr Clarke could cut income tax by 4p or do the same to VAT. The rate-payers would howl. But the howl would be directed at Labour.

Mr Major is too timid for this strategy. It has been hotly debated in Downing Street, where Mr Major himself is in favour. But the Treasury has said "no". For reasons that need no guessing, Mr Major does not feel strong enough to stand up to Mr Clarke just now. The Treasury's concern for the aggregates of public spending is thus in sublime union with the Chancellor's loathing for local government and his own mischievous ambition. As his treatment of Gillian Shephard and teachers' pay showed, Mr Clarke revels in humiliating Tory and Labour councillors alike. They are "holding back for an election winning tax cut". That sounds like the same political savvy that brought us the "incomparable boom" of ERM membership.

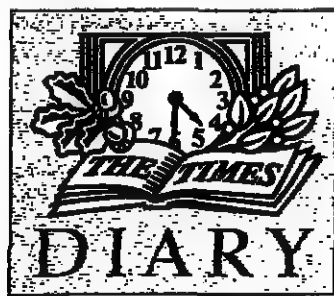
The fact is that the Treasury has shot Mr Major's one good fox. By rendering local councils unaccountable, yet preventing them from overspending or overtaxing, Mr Clarke has wrecked the best tactic for embarrassing Labour in the next two years. Forget the polls and the melt-downs. Forget even the pollution of the constitution. The neutering of local government under John Major has been just plain stupid.

Oh, brother

WATCH Tony Blair's famous grin when he welcomes all his new councillors. For the Labour leader, who turns 42 today, will come face to face with one of those trade union dinosaurs he is trying so hard to marginalise. Evans, Arthur Mostyn, Labour councillor on King's Lynn and West Norfolk council, is better known as Moss Evans, legendary general secretary of the Transport and General Workers' Union in the 1970s.

At 69, Evans looks certain to become council leader after one of the most extraordinary routs of the elections. His political resurrection is all the more remarkable as Evans is largely blamed for provoking the "Winter of Discontent" which brought down the Callaghan government in 1979. He later underwent extensive stomach surgery for cancer.

To convalesce, Evans and his wife Laura retired to their caravan at Heacham, near King's Lynn. Ten years later, he became the first Labour councillor and, when joined by others, was elected leader of the Labour group. "It's overwhelming. I was up



until a quarter to three last night," chuckled Evans yesterday. "And I had a meeting at 9.30 this morning. Now I've been elected I've got to bring home the bacon."

Meanwhile he spares little sympathy for the defeated Tories. "I'm told that when Henry Bellingham, the local Tory MP, was canvassing he said to people you are not going to vote for that man who brought the country to a standstill in 1979? Now I've topped the poll."

● Poor Baroness Blatch, the highly-regarded Home Office minister, did not have a happy evening as she watched the local election

results come through until one o'clock with John Major in his Downing Street flat. Her son, James, failed for the second year to be elected a councillor in Huntingdon, despite assiduous canvassing by the PM's wife, Norma.

Goon diggin'

SPIKE MILLIGAN has developed a passion for ancient ruins. In lively form at the launch of *Spike Milligan: A Celebration* in Piccadilly on Thursday night, the 77-year-old explained his new interest in life.

"My embouchure has gone, so I can't play the trumpet any more, which is sad, but I have always wanted to be an archaeologist and now I am doing a bit of amateur excavating," he explained. "I have been on some digs down in Sussex and we have found what we think is a Roman temple and are waiting to see if we can go ahead and excavate further. I've found quite a few Roman coins so hopefully they'll earn me more than my books."

Matinée idle

AFTER negotiations with Equity and the backstage unions, Sunday

performances have returned to London's West End theatres. A couple of musicals tried it last month and tomorrow *A Passionate Woman*, starring Stephanie Cole, will play at the Comedy. More than 40 members of the audience will be wearing dog-collars.

There is a matinee performance only, with the curtain scheduled to come down at ten to six, leaving local clergymen just enough time to scurry back to their flocks for Evensong. "We invited 200 vicars who



It's like spot-the-ball, but a lot harder

live within four miles of the theatre," says producer David Pugh. "The response has been wonderful. We've got 39 vicars, one canon and a deaconess coming along. We have asked them to wear their clerical collars so we can recognise them. It's nothing to do with Peter Tatchell but we wanted to give them a free outing."

● Viewers to BBC TV's Six O'Clock News were deprived of the sight of Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, last night because of the lack of cosmetics. On arrival at the Beeb's Millbank studios, Howard, sporting a five o'clock shadow, learnt there was no professional make-up girl to prepare him. He declined to be interviewed.

Party time

IN A typically generous touch yesterday, Lords leader and VE-Day supreme Lord Cranborne threw a party for John Major and selected colleagues to cheer them up on the latest Black Friday. The "at home" at the Q22 Conference Centre off Parliament Square caused disrespectful giggles about "alternative" parties when guests were required by security to wear labels stating "Lord Cranborne's Party". Never-



O'Brien: mystery admirer

theless it was a bash to which the Prime Minister had been looking forward all week. I am told.

When chatting to MPs in the Commons tea-room on Tuesday, Major related how he had tried for Dorset West, the seat which Cranborne once represented. "When he was waiting in the local Tory offices, Cranborne walked in and the entire party executive instantly stood to attention," confides my in-

formant. "John said he knew straight away his chances were nil."

Plot thickens

WHAT with the clandestine midnight feasts and illicit trips to the pub, health farms can be busy places after dark. And so an exclusive establishment in Hampshire discovered when it entertained the flame-haired author Edna O'Brien.

O'Brien, like fellow guests Joan Collins and Denis Norden, kept herself very much to herself. But it seems she had a mysterious admirer. "I was in my room and I heard something being stuffed under the door," explains another guest. "It was a letter garlanded with flowers addressed to what looked like 'Edna'. I couldn't understand it and opened it and discovered a love letter. From someone saying how much they had admired this person from afar for years. I couldn't make out a lot of it because the writing wasn't very good but then it dawned that it was meant for Edna. So I quickly put it back in the envelope and popped it downstairs to reception."

P-H-S



VICTORY TO DEFEAT

A weekend pause for commemoration — but then what?

As Conservative MPs sat in Westminster Hall yesterday to hear the Queen's VE-Day address, their thoughts could not help but stray from victory to defeat. After a night on which they had surrendered control of all but 13 of Britain's 407 local councils to Labour and the Liberal Democrats, there was plenty to occupy their minds. Unlike the bunting and the military bands, the Tory problems will still be with them when the weekend is over.

The scale of their defeat was extraordinary in itself. Analysts have struggled to remember a comparable loss of seats or councils. On Thursday morning the Conservatives controlled 73 councils, including four London boroughs and one shire county. By Friday morning that figure had dropped to just 13. Only a few weeks ago Conservative Central Office was claiming that the loss of 1,000 seats would be a disaster. The figure was hastily revised upwards, but still failed to match the loss of about 2,000 seats. With just the occasional blue dot left on the recoloured political map, the Tories can claim to be no more than a fringe party of local government.

This matters not just because of the effect on town halls. It matters because there are now another 2,000 local Tories who have given years, sometimes decades of service to local government, and who now find themselves not even in opposition, but out of local politics altogether because of the mess that their masters in Westminster have created. Local councillors are the backbone of Conservative associations. Those who lost on Thursday cannot expect to reclaim their seats for another four years. It will not be surprising if many — especially the older ones — decide to bow out of politics for good. The Conservative election machine used to purr like a Rolls-Royce. It is now stuttering badly. A combination of poor

leadership from the top, financial difficulties, the sacking of agents and desperately low morale among the ageing foot soldiers means that Labour can now boast a more efficient campaigning organisation. This bodes ill for the next general election.

So does fuller analysis of Thursday night's results. The Tories had hoped that Labour's resurgence under Tony Blair would split the Opposition vote in the South and allow Conservatives to hold their seats. Instead, voters aimed their anti-Government venom precisely at the party that was most likely to defeat the sitting Conservative. This sort of tactical voting is particularly frightening to Tories. Until now, it has been rare in England and Wales; but in Scotland in 1987, it reduced the Conservatives to a mere ten seats out of 72.

The other frightening outcome was the resurgence of Labour in areas of the South. Castle Point in Essex, for instance, had 35 Conservative and four Labour councillors on Thursday morning. By yesterday, Labour had 34 and the Tories only five. Bracknell Forest, which had not a single Labour councillor until eight years ago, is now controlled by Mr Blair's party. And even Hove, that sometime bastion of Conservative gentility, is now a Labour council.

The plotting among Tory MPs has barely begun. It will not become formal until they reassemble at Westminster next Tuesday. Meanwhile, this weekend, they will have to endure the wrath of their local parties. According to *The Times*'s own survey, a majority of Tory councillors say that they do not want John Major to go. Yet the most important reason they cited for their defeat was general government incompetence. When the weekend celebrations are over, the contradiction between those two positions may look rather more stark.

KENNETH THE BRAVE

The Chancellor was right not to raise interest rates

Kenneth Clarke has done nothing and done it well. His decision to keep interest rates steady yesterday defied a virtually unanimous clamour from the City for higher rates. It was probably taken against the advice of the Bank of England. It marked the Chancellor as a man of courage, in the best sense of that word.

Mr Clarke's courage has sometimes seemed akin to the lemmings'. But yesterday the value of his well-known robustness was revealed. For any Chancellor, it takes a certain bravado to defy the financial markets. The "soft option" can often be to inflict unnecessary damage on the economy in the name of "financial prudence", a concept which the City claims the right to define as it pleases. This week's clamour for higher interest rates was a clear case.

There were no strong economic arguments for the Chancellor to rush into raising interest rates. Most of the statistics released in the three months since the last increase suggested that the economy was slowing. Inflation showed no sign of acceleration and pay settlements, which are ultimately the most important determinant of future price trends, had actually started falling. The manufacturing sector, which had previously been fuelling the recovery and beginning to bid up wages, had stopped growing since October. Car sales were flat and the housing market remained in depression. Although there were some tentative signs of strength in the service sector, revealed in the GDP figures published in April, these were highly suspect — "puzzling" and inconsistent with other evidence, as Mr Clarke noted in his press conference yesterday.

Presented with this conflict of evidence, the Chancellor should have had no trouble in deciding the prudent course. He could

afford to postpone any decision for another month, while more accurate and up to date statistics were collected. If it turned out that the service sector was really overheating or that the pause in manufacturing activity was nothing more than a temporary aberration, Mr Clarke would have plenty of time to raise interest rates in June or July. If on the other hand, the economy was slowing, judicious inaction now would avoid the risk of needlessly making things worse.

Why, then, was the City shocked by the Chancellor's decision and why did the Bank of England apparently favour a rate increase at once? There seems to be only one reason. Back in March, the Bank expressed some anxiety about the weakness of sterling. Since then the pound has fallen a further 2 per cent. The Bank noted that the fall of the pound was largely related to events in America and Germany and therefore beyond Britain's control. Mr Clarke said quite explicitly in Washington that he would not raise interest rates to "defend" the pound. But the City ignored him and convinced itself that the Bank would demand an immediate increase in rates. The Bank, having rather foolishly allowed the expectations of higher rates to take hold, probably felt it could not afford to disappoint the City, fearing damage to its prized "credibility" as a guardian against inflation.

The Chancellor was quite right to call a halt to this game of double-bluff. There would be only one sound reason for raising interest rates in Britain today: if credible evidence emerged of economic overheating or intensifying wage pressure. The wellbeing of British business is too important to put at risk in psychological games with financial markets. Mr Clarke should be congratulated for calling the City's bluff.

BISHOPS AND BAD EARS

VE-Day is a celebration of the everyday as well as the epic

HITLER DEAD. VICTORY IN EUROPE TO BE DECLARED TO-DAY. THE KING AND MR. CHURCHILL TO BROADCAST. Of the millions of words written and broadcast about VE-Day in the past week, more than were published during the whole of the last war, the most vivid have been the facsimiles of contemporary publications.

Those pages from *The Times* of the first week of May 1945 (the last one will appear with the proclamation of VE-Day on Monday) are a time-machine to present the world earthquake as it seemed at the time. The headlines in *Times* Roman and Bold, stacked in as many decks as a First World War battleship, tell in the cold journalism of a vanished age the dramatic story of the days of victory.

Journalism is only the first draft of history. And with memoirs, the release of secret documents, hindsight and revisionism we know the story more accurately and fully than the sub-editors of 50 years ago. Hitler had not escaped. The Russian delegations were arriving in San Francisco with a more sinister agenda than securing peace. But the sinister agenda had been forgotten footnotes recreate other sights and sounds from those days of glory and relief. The Germans may have announced unconditional surrender. But on our main news page we reported that the Bishop of Malmesbury had to undergo an operation and would be unable to resume his duties until the end of May. *The Times* headlined a "confused

situation" in the Balkans, showing that some places never change. But at the same time London's tram and trolleybus men had called a wildcat strike, spoiling the folk myth of all pulling together. The terrible list of Fallen Officers may be found on page 7. But on our main page a forgotten premier of Queensland is reported to be in a London nursing home suffering from ear trouble.

The thousand-year Reich collapses. Dynasties pass. But it has been arranged that newspaper workers shall take their holiday on the day after VE-Day and that *The Times* will therefore not be published on Thursday. Icarus falls out of the sky in Breughel's painting, and the world turns its back on the prodigious disaster and carries on with its ploughing, its sheep, its sailing and its other mundane activities. Life must go on.

Humankind cannot bear very much higher history. The King is paying his victory tribute to his peoples and the conquering captains are in San Francisco to make the peace. But for the first time since the war began, security has been so relaxed that Britain can start having weather forecasts to grumble about again and the BBC can stop its vulgar wartime practice of naming its announcers in order to baffle spies and impostors. History is not just about the fùhrers and the field marshals, though they are the ones who star in the history books. VE-Day was a triumph for the ordinary men and women who had the lion's heart, as well as of the great ones who gave the lion's roar.

Complexities of mortgage policies

From Mr Martin Lingeman

Sir, Both your correspondent and Sir Bryan Carsberg, Director-General of the Office of Fair Trading (reports, April 29), seem to have adopted the widely held belief that an "endowment mortgage" is a single entity — it is not.

The borrower takes out a loan (the mortgage) from a lender, usually a building society, and in order to repay that loan in most cases starts some form of long-term savings plan which may be an endowment policy, a unit or investment trust savings plan or PEP or even a personal pension plan. The granting of a mortgage loan may not be governed by the Financial Services Act, but with respect to Sir Bryan the advice on an endowment policy or other savings plan must certainly be.

A with-profits low-cost endowment policy is probably the most affordable lower-risk form of disciplined savings with which to repay a mortgage. Since few borrowers can be bothered to shop around for a suitable policy or to take independent advice and, yes, building societies can earn handsome commissions from selling such policies, the mortgage papers and the endowment application form are often completed on the same occasion.

Robert Miller's article comments that one of the key criticisms of endowment mortgages is that stock market returns are not guaranteed — well of course they aren't. He might as well have said that one of the key criticisms of a bicycle is that it only has two wheels. At least a with-profits endowment policy helps to even out stock market fluctuations, something that the PEP or unit/investment trust savings plan by definition does not.

The coverage goes on to advocate by implication the more straightforward interest-only or repayment mortgage, but fails to point out that a pure interest-only mortgage is generally only available for 60 per cent of the purchase price, or that a repayment mortgage may (subject to prevailing interest rates) be more expensive to run, will normally need to be backed up by some form of life assurance policy to protect the borrower's family, and is usually not portable when moving house.

Yours faithfully,
MARTIN LINGEMAN,
Hurstbourne Park,
Whitchurch, Hampshire.
May 1.

From Dr Peter J. Smith

Sir, An endowment mortgage is one that guarantees the amount required to pay off the mortgage at the end of the term. The only uncertainty is how much the borrower will receive back in addition, in accrued bonuses. I am buying my house on an endowment policy, as did my parents.

A rather different animal is the low-cost endowment mortgage. Here, the sum assured is much lower than that required to settle the loan (except on earlier death) and the balance depends on the accrued bonuses — which, indeed, may turn out to be insufficient.

Low-cost endowment mortgages became popular during the 1980s because, for obvious reasons, they are much cheaper than the genuine article. It was obvious at the time, however, that people who took them were, in effect, gambling with their house.

Before people worry, they should check to see whether they have a proper endowment mortgage or its nastier relation.

Yours sincerely,
PETER J. SMITH,
32 St James Close,
Hanslope, Buckinghamshire.
May 1.

Weekend Money letters, page 35

Local election results

From Mr Simon Cockburn

Sir, Having listened to the coverage of the local election results on Radio 4's Today programme this morning, I can only say that I find the arrogance of the Tory interviewers quite breathtaking. Jeremy Hanley and Michael Howard talked in terms of the need to "get through to the voters" and "get the message across". Do they think we are backward children who have failed to appreciate all they have done for us?

The voters have sent a clear message to the Tory party. But will they listen? It would seem not. We are told they will "shrug it off" and "will press on with their policies".

If they do not listen to us, particularly on education, then we will have to teach them another lesson at the polling stations.

Yours faithfully,
SIMON COCKBURN,
23 McCarthy Walk,
Basingstoke, Hampshire.
May 5.

From Mr Stephen Bayley

Sir, I wonder how soon members of the Conservative Party will start advocating proportional representation?

Yours sincerely,
STEPHEN BAYLEY,
6 North Hill Close,
Burton Bradstock,
Bridport, Dorset.
May 5.

Arts and National Lottery funding

From Professor Sir Alan Peacock, FBA

Sir, Magnus Linklater ("How much do we value the arts?", Scottish edition, May 2) rightly draws attention to the paradox of confining National Lottery funding of the arts largely to capital expenditure when theatre and opera companies cannot earn enough to cover their current costs. Public appreciation of the creative and performing arts simply does not accord with the cognoscenti's view of our artistic achievement.

One possible way out of this dilemma is to extend the definition of "capital investment" to "human capital". I was therefore glad to see that Richard Morrison (Arts, April 29) supports my idea that lottery funding should be targeted towards the young, through support of arts education and voucher schemes which would allow them to choose which arts to support. The long-term aim would be to resolve the Linklater dilemma by creating such enthusiasm for our artistic achievements that government subsidies would become largely unnecessary.

Nothing in the above suggestions need preclude "polling the punters" in order to sensitize those in charge of lottery funding to public opinion. If this were done, I would be surprised if there were not widespread support for investing in youth.

Yours sincerely,
ALAN PEACOCK,
146/4 Whitehouse Lane,
Edinburgh 9.
May 2.

From the Secretary General of the Arts Council

Sir, Richard Morrison's article does not do justice to the Arts Council of England's lottery funding policy. Rather than being tied to the arts establishment, as he suggests, we are

committed to ensuring that the widest possible range of organisations benefit.

So far, we have made awards to two brass bands, a regional dance centre and a children's theatre, among others. This pattern of funding, which rewards the excellence of regional and local arts organisations as well as the "cultural giants", will continue.

Sixty-eight per cent of the applications currently being assessed is for sums less than £100,000, of which roughly half are for less than £30,000. The quality of these applications suggests that a high proportion of them will receive funding.

While policy directions from government dictate that lottery money must be spent mainly on new buildings and equipment, Richard Morrison implies that it would be better spent on the running or production costs of arts organisations.

This ignores one of the most important principles behind the lottery. It was set up to provide new money for benefiting "good causes". Spending lottery money on running costs would almost inevitably cause government to reduce its revenue subsidy for the arts.

The article also fails to recognise that there is an urgent need for capital investment in the arts. There are far too many theatres and galleries with leaking roofs and other defects and far too few accessible to people with disabilities. Arts lottery funding will increase audiences by making venues more comfortable, attractive and accessible. All the organisations that we fund with lottery money will also increase audiences through education programmes.

Yours sincerely,
MARY ALLEN,
Secretary General,
The Arts Council of England,
14 Great Peter Street, SW1.
May 3.

Church finances

From the Reverend R. S. J. Charles

Sir, The Church Commissioners (report, May 3; letters, April 24, May 2) in no way subsidise parishes. The so-called "Commissioners' Money" that is said to subsidise stipends is mainly parish money that has been left to the parishes over the centuries to finance the parochial clergy. The fact that it has now been centralised does not mean it no longer belongs to the parishes.

The Church of England operates a parochial system that enables any resident to call upon the services of its ministers. This is its privilege and duty as the "establishment".

Clergy do not serve just a membership, as is the case with ministers of all the other denominations. For this reason the maintaining of the parochial clergy rightly falls on the Church's historic resources as well as on present congregations.

Yours faithfully,
ROBERT CHARLES,
The Vicarage, Rufford Road,
Crossens, Southport, Merseyside.

From Professor Emeritus D. R. Denman

Sir, In 1960, ten years before synodical reform was imposed in 1970, when the affairs of the Church of England were under the governance of Church As-

sembly, that worthy house set up a commission, of which I was a member, to examine and report on the future management of parsonages and Church lands, notably glebe (and attached to a parish church).

The commission had an eye to the brewers who, like the Church, had property in every parish of the realm. Inspiration from this parallel and other sources resulted in a recommendation to establish diocesan land agencies to manage with a professional hand all glebe land in the respective dioceses; glebe was to remain in the independent freehold of each incumbent.

Alas, politics at that time were under the influence of the heady wine of centralisation and other socialist dogma. Church Assembly was likewise inebriated.

Consequently, in 1967, under the lead of the First Church Estates Commissioner and the sway of socialist ethos, the sound recommendations of its commission were thrown out and the management and ownership of all glebe were centralised in the hands of the Church Commissioners.

How different would the aggregate property value of the Church of England have been today, had the assembly followed the wiser advocacy of its own commission.

Yours etc,
D. R. DENMAN,
Pembroke College, Cambridge.

Civil to a fault

From the Chairman of the Police Society

Sir, Whilst not wishing to involve myself in the staff policies of Harrods, I am sure many readers will be as incredulous as our members to learn (report, "Harrods manager" driven to resign because she was too soft on staff", May 3) that any organisation might consider it a fault for staff to be "too polite".

Yours truly,
GERALD HANSON, Chairman,
Police Society,
Potters Lodge, 74a Slough Road,
Iver Heath, Buckinghamshire.
May 5.

Wellington's charger

From Colonel A. L. Mallinson

Sir, The Duke of Wellington's charger, Copenhagen, was not an Arab (Diary, April 27) or the grey in the accompanying picture. His dam's sire was the Rutland Arabian, making him quarter-Arab, and he had Arab blood through his thoroughbred lines — a grandeur was the famous racehorse Eclipse — but he was otherwise a hunter type, and a chestnut.

The Duke said of him: "There may have been many faster horses, no doubt many handsomer, but for bottom and endurance I never saw his fellow."

Few British officers at that time would have taken an Arab on campaign: they were showy but not big or robust enough. British thoroughbreds and hunters, many from Ireland, were the envy of continental armies. At Waterloo the Duke escaped danger on at least two occasions by Copenhagen's big jump.

The horse carried him throughout the battle, during which Wellington received not so much as a scratch, and they rode by moonlight back to the Duke's headquarters in Waterloo village. On dismounting, Wellington gave him a pat on the quarters, where

seemly, that worthy house set up a commission, of which I was a member, to examine and report on the future management of parsonages and Church lands, notably glebe (and attached to a parish church).

The commission had an eye to the brewers who, like the Church, had property in every parish of the realm. Inspiration from this parallel and other sources resulted in a recommendation to establish diocesan land agencies to manage with a professional hand all glebe land in the respective dioceses; glebe was to remain in the independent freehold of each incumbent.

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How different would the aggregate property value of the Church of England have been today, had the assembly followed the wiser advocacy of its own commission.

Yours etc,
D. R. DENMAN,
Pembroke College, Cambridge.

UK and Europe

From Mr Bernard Buckle

Sir, Parliament is sovereign [Viscount Tony's letter, April 26; other letters, April 27, May 1]. Whatever Parliament has made by way of treaty it can always unmake.

Of course there would be cost in abrogating, say, the Treaty of Rome: but if we ever had to do so we could. We have not given away our independence, merely done a deal.

Yours etc,
BERNARD BUCKLE,
Flat Five,
99 High Street,
Ventnor, Isle of Wight.
April 21.

upon Copenhagen lashed out and very nearly did him serious injury.

Yours faithfully,
ALLAN MALLINSON,
The Cavalry and Guards Club,
Piccadilly, W1.
April 28.

From Mrs Stella A. Walker

Sir, Copenhagen's dam was Lady Catherine, the mare that carried General Grosvenor at the siege of Copenhagen. She embarked to England in foal to Meneer, second in the 1786 Derby, and in 1808 produced the bright chestnut that was named after the campaign.

When the horse died in 1836 he was buried, with military honours, at Stratfield Saye, Hampshire, where a headstone marks his grave.

Sir Edward Boehm's bronze statue at Hyde Park Corner remains the finest representation of the horse.

Yours faithfully,
STELLA A. WALKER,
Watermill Farm, Rushlake Green,
Heathfield, East Sussex.

Letters should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be faxed to 0171-782 5046.

A wizard prang on wartime slang

From Dr Denis Cashman

Sir, I will surely not be the only septuagenarian to take issue with Philip Howard's entertaining column (April 29). "A flap" was certainly not limited to an air raid. It referred more generally to the alarm of any situation of unpreparedness — the unannounced arrival of top brass, for example.

"Sprag" may have been a sailor's term, but it was primarily an RAF term for a junior, or any learner, a sprag pilot, for example, was more likely to prang his own kite. My four children, all but one now in their forties, I frequently refer to as my sprags.

"Finger trouble" surely predated Far East POW camps and meant an inability to get on with the job because of over-zealous attention to the rule book.

TTFN,
DENIS CASHMAN,
4 Derwent Road,
Cullercoats, Tyne and Wear.
May 1.

From Mr Peter May

Sir, I completed a tour of operations as a navigator in Wellington bombers and although we frequently called our pilot a variety of names, "bus driver" was not among them. The term was, I think, sometimes used of pilots in heavy bomber squadrons.

"The drink" meant generally the sea, not specifically the Channel. I had the misfortune to ditch in the Atlantic in 1943 (and the good fortune to be rescued after 48 hours); we did not call it either the "herring pond" or the "gravy".

To get (or pull) one's finger out was in general use before Japan entered the war. "Wizard", as a word of general approbation, I suspect owes as much to the popular boys' weekly, *The Wizard*, as to Waugh or Wodehouse.

Yours faithfully,
PETER MAY,
(ex-F/Lt, 192 Squadron,
Bomber Command),
43 Fresson, Foston,
Peterborough, Cambridgeshire.
May 1.

From Mrs Margery Hartley

Sir, The naval expression "parting brasses", meaning a disagreement, is a good deal older than the last war. I heard it often as a child in the Twenties, and I imagine my mother got it from a brother who was a midshipman ("snotty") on HMS Cornwall in the First World War battle of the Falklands.

But as polishing and painting were constant chores in the days of huge peacetime fleets the phrase almost certainly goes back to the beginning of the century, if not earlier.

Yours sincerely,
MARGERY HARTLEY,
1 Dover Close,
Alresford, Hampshire.
May 1.

Pollution alert

From Mr K. F. Cerny

Sir, Your report (May 4) highlighting a "pollution alert" comes as no surprise. In a country where road transport is seen as the be all and end all of our transport needs, and where bus deregulation has resulted in a plethora of companies bidding for our custom, it is no wonder the quality of our air is declining.

A visit to a bus terminus will show you a contributory factor with buses standing idle with engines running and in some cases no drivers in attendance. Giving powers to traffic wardens to fine bus companies for condoning this practice may go a little way to improving our air quality.

Yours sincerely,
K. CZERNY,
44 Abbotsford Gardens,
Woodford Green, Essex.
May 4.

Labour and industry

From Sir Ian Morrow

Sir, Dr Jack Cunningham pithily describes Labour policy aimed at creating a world-class British industry without once mentioning management (letter, May 2; see also letter, May 5).

It is possible to have good relations with the unions, a trained workforce, and first-class investment, but without world-class management there is no world-class industry.

Management must have the freedom to create world-class companies and not be restricted by government policies which normally, by the time they are applied, are out of date.

Yours truly,
IAN MORROW,
2 Albert Terrace Mews, NW1.
May 3.

Early learning

From Mr Jonathan Portch

Sir, I have a very ill cat. To encourage him to eat at least something, I have purchased some baby food. At "three months" it is suitable for vegetarians: should we really empower the young at so tender an age?

Yours,
J. S. PORTCH,
27 Lateward Road,
Brentford, Middlesex.
May 4.

OBITUARIES

SIR ALASTAIR PILKINGTON

Sir Alastair Pilkington, FRS, inventor, company chairman and philanthropist, died in London yesterday aged 75. He was born in Calcutta on January 7, 1920.



ALASTAIR PILKINGTON was responsible for one of the most important inventions since the war. It completely transformed the flat glass industry and is now in use all over the world. The development of his revolutionary float glass process into a saleable money-maker took another decade. And his advocacy in the teeth of many problems — even when the full-scale production plant was losing more than £1 million a year — was equally crucial to its ultimate success in the early 1960s. The £1 million it has subsequently earned in fees and royalties, as it came to replace not only plate but also sheet glass throughout the world, has enabled Pilkington to expand his own manufacturing operations abroad, to acquire the largest glass manufacturer in Germany, Flachglas, and the second largest in the United States (the glass interest of Libbey-Owens-Ford) and to emerge as the world's leading glass producer.

The remarkable fact is that Alastair Pilkington himself was not a member of the St Helens glass-making family. Born Lionel Alexander Bethune Pilkington — Alastair was his own choice of Christian name — he was the second son of Lionel and Evelyn Pilkington. His father, an engineer, had become a reserve officer in the First World War. As an ex-soldier, he believed in constant exercise of mind and body, while Alastair's mother was a Christian Scientist. His upbringing from the earliest days in Calcutta, where his father worked for a few years, and then from the mid-1920s in England, taught him to exercise his mind over a wide range of subjects.

After school at Sherborne, he went up to Cambridge in 1938 to read mechanical sciences — and to pick up a Blue at squash and a half Blue at fives. He became a reserve officer in the Royal Artillery, arguing that "if there is to be a war, it will be safer among the Regulars". He was posted to Egypt a week before war was declared and was in the thick of the fighting in Greece. He was one of the last to escape from

there. In Crete, however, he spent precious time rounding up the stragglers and when he brought them to the evacuation beach, lots had to be drawn for the few remaining places in the boats. He spent the rest of the war as a prisoner-of-war in Germany, but he used his days busily learning the clarinet, playing in the camp orchestra, reading books for his course when he returned to Cambridge and keeping fit. He resumed his degree in October 1945 — and picked up a lawn tennis Blue. He had married in July Patricia Elliott, daughter of the rear-admiral in command of Alexandria, to whom he had become engaged when in Egypt.

It was at this juncture that his father, then managing director of Pulsometer, Reading, played a vital part in his son's career. He was interested in his family tree and so was Richard Pilkington, a non-executive member of the St Helens glass-making family, who had just lost his seat in Parliament. Having failed to find any link between the two branches, he let it be known that he

had a very able son reading engineering at Cambridge. Any chance of a job at St Helens? As it happened, St Helens was at that time searching high and low for suitable engineers. The Pilkington board considered Richard Pilkington's communication at the end of November 1945 and came to the remarkable conclusion that a suitably qualified member of the Pilkington family, "however remote", could be accepted only as a potential family director. Alastair was later vetted at St Helens. It was clear that his outlook on business and life fitted in very well with that of the St Helens Pilkingtons who believed that any director ought to be able and more hard-working than anyone else employed by the company.

Accordingly, he arrived at St Helens in August 1947 straight from Cambridge. Accelerated promotion brought him on to the board in 1953 where he found himself defending continued expenditure on float glass even though, as he later confessed, "if we had known

all the horrors ahead, we would never have shared".

He shared the St Helens Pilkingtons' social conscience and sense of community. As early as 1957 he succeeded Sir Harry (later Lord) Pilkington as chairman of the St Helens Housing Association, a charity to help house the town's elderly. Nearly twenty years later, in 1976, he formed the St Helens Trust, in collaboration with other businessmen in the area and the local authority, in order to help those made redundant to set up their own small businesses (not only with financial help but more importantly with practical management advice). Here, he was again a pioneer. His ideas were later adopted on a national scale. He became founder-chairman of the Council of Business in the Community, 1982-85, later to receive the support of the Prince of Wales. He served on the Wellcome Foundation during the 1980s. He was as innovative in various charitable fields as he had been as a company director and a leader in spreading the ideas of business making its contribution to the public welfare.

In addition to his fellowship of the Royal Society, to which he was elected in 1969, honorary degrees were showered upon him — partly, no doubt, because he was particularly concerned with higher education. He had been Pro-Chancellor of Lancaster University between 1980 and 1990 and became the Chancellor of Liverpool University — with which he had close earlier connections — just a year ago.

Since 1990 he had devoted much of his energy to his own university, Cambridge, through his work as the first chairman of the Cambridge Foundation. He became an honorary fellow of his own old college, Trinity, Imperial College, London, and of the London School of Economics.

Music continued to be a particular interest. He remained physically active almost to the very end, especially in sailing and skiing. Within the last year or two he had taken to hang-gliding.

His first wife died in 1977. He is survived by his second wife, Kathleen, the widow of Eldridge Haynes, founder of Business International, and by a son and a daughter from his first marriage as well as by three stepchildren.

S. Gorley Putt, OBE, former Warden of Harkness House, London, and Senior Tutor of Christ's College, Cambridge, died on April 24 aged 81. He was born in Brixham on June 9, 1913.



GORLEY PUTT (he disdained the use of his first name) was the antithesis of Belloc's "remote and ineffectual don"; for the last 27 years of his career, as a fellow of Christ's College, his greatest joy was to befriend the young and to introduce them to the finer things of life. "My friends are the undergraduates, chaps and chappesses," he recorded in his autobiography *Wings of a Man's Life*, "and as long as I can pour good wine down their gullets and listen into the small hours of their hopes and try to encourage the sensibilities of the unambitious, then I can go on spouting the shortest teachers' training course ever invented.... Remember my two rules: You must love your subject of study. You must love your pupils."

Samuel Gorley Putt (his second and preferred name was also his mother's maiden name) was born into a seafaring family in Brixham. His father was drowned in 1918 when, as commodore of a convoy, his ship was torpedoed while making for Milford Haven. As an only child, Putt was much thrown onto his own resources and spent his time, when opportunity afforded, swimming or sailing and, at all other times, in voracious reading. It was this early exposure to literature, complemented by exposure to good teaching of English at Torquay Grammar School, that caused him to fall under the spell of "that unbounded affluence of one ever-present agency for heart and brain alike — the English language."

It was a passion that pervaded his whole life and caused him to write innumerable literary reviews, to publish a volume of poems as well as several books including two

on Henry James, and to be elected a fellow of the Royal Society of Literature in 1952. Putt won a Devon county major scholarship to Christ's in 1930 to read English; he graduated in 1933 with a first-class degree. After a year of research into "Jacobethan" drama, he succeeded in gaining a Commonwealth Fund Fellowship. This award, which enabled him not only to acquire, at Yale University, the first of his two MA degrees but also to travel widely throughout the United States, laid the foundation of his abiding affection for America; it also initiated his connection with the fund which was to employ him for nearly 20 years later in his career. Putt vividly recounted his experiences, and those of other Commonwealth Fund fellows, in his *View from Atlantis* (1955).

On his return from the US in 1936, Putt joined the BBC as a Talks Assistant. However, after a year in the post he felt increasingly unhappy at what he termed "the flurried unrewarding anonymity" of his job and resigned. After a brief period of literary reviewing he took up a one-year lectureship in English at the University College of the South West, at Exeter. This was followed by a brief period at Queen's University, Belfast, as warden of a student hostel and secretary of the appointments committee. But when the Second World War broke out Putt volunteered for the Royal Navy;

consequently, by mid-1940, he found himself in the uniform of an ordinary seaman and shortly thereafter on a 1917-vintage destroyer engaged on convoy duty. He chronicled his experiences below deck in his first book, *Men dressed as Seamen* (1943). In 1941 Putt was posted to Bletchley Park as an officer in Naval Intelligence; he remained in the Royal Navy until, in the rank of lieutenant-commander, he returned to Exeter in 1946, as Warden of Crossmead Hall and Tutor for Overseas Students. In the 1945 general election he stood unsuccessfully for Torquay.

In 1949 Putt was appointed Warden of Harkness House, London, the British base for the Commonwealth Fund's fellowship programme; he became the first non-American director of the fund's division of international fellowships in 1966. During this time Putt initiated a highly successful programme of European-US fellowships: he was appointed OBE in 1966 in recognition of his services in fostering international friendship and in 1980 was appointed as *Cavaliere of the Italian Order of Merit*.

Putt left Harkness House in order to accept the full-time Senior Tutorship of Christ's College in 1968; he held this office until his retirement in 1978. These years were marked by great changes in collegiate life: the early period was disturbed by much student unrest; the latter saw the admission of women into the hitherto all-male society. That the college survived these events to its ultimate benefit is due to a large extent to Putt's patience.

Gorley Putt never married, although he privately regretted this. He regarded the college as his family and treated young and old alike with unfailing courtesy, warmth and infectious good humour. His favourite author, Henry James, might have had Putt in mind when he wrote: "He was so particularly the English gentleman... In what perfection England produces them!"

PROFESSOR LESLIE PYRAH

Professor Leslie Pyrah, CBE, urologist, died on April 30 aged 96. He was born on April 11, 1899.



LESLIE PYRAH was the first professor of urological surgery in the United Kingdom. Although primarily a surgeon interested in the art of his speciality, he was one of the first to realise the importance of the scientific approach to urology, and the Medical Research Council Unit, of which he was honorary director, played a large part in elucidating many of the problems involved, such as that of stone of the kidney.

Leslie Norman Pyrah graduated BSc from Leeds University in 1922, proceeding to his MB, ChB in 1924. In 1929 he was elected a fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons of England, and the following year became ChM. These six postgraduate years were occupied by resident posts ranging over a wide field of surgery, giving him that invaluable background of general surgery that was to prove so useful when he finally specialised.

In 1934 he was appointed assistant surgeon to the Leeds General Infirmary and lec-

turer in surgery in Leeds University, thus starting on a career which was to culminate in his being appointed surgeon in charge of the newly formed department of urology in Leeds General Infirmary and St James's Hospital. Six years later he was appointed to a personal chair in the university.

His reputation was international, as exemplified by the numerous lectures he was invited to give overseas — in, for example, the United States, Canada, Australia, Hong Kong, India and South Africa, as well as in many European

countries. At home, among the lectures he delivered were the Lichfield Lecture in Oxford University in 1959 and the Hunterian Oration of the Royal College of Surgeons of England in 1969.

He also served as president of the British Association of Urological Surgeons, which awarded him in 1963 its St Peter's Medal for outstanding contributions to urology, and as president of the section of urology of the Royal Society of Medicine.

In 1965 his old university made him an honorary DSc and elected him emeritus professor. He also served as a member of the university's joint committee on higher surgical training.

Independence — the traditional, sometimes rugged, independence of a Yorkshireman — was the hallmark of his life, characterising all his work and allowing him to achieve all he did for the speciality, of which he was such a distinguished member. He was appointed CBE in 1963.

He married Mary Christopher Batley in 1934. She died in 1990. He is survived by one son and one daughter. One son predeceased him.

KENNETH GARDNER

Kenneth Gardner, Deputy Keeper of Oriental Manuscripts and Printed Books at the British Library, 1974-86, died on April 18 aged 70. He was born on June 5, 1924.



KEN GARDNER was a world-renowned expert on ancient Japanese bookbinding received the Order of the Sacred Treasure in 1979 from Emperor Hirohito for his work on Japanese studies in Japan and England.

Then in February this year, his *Descriptive Catalogue of Japanese Books in the British Library Printed Before 1700*, published by The British Library last year, won him the Yamagata Banto Prize from the Osaka district government, worth 3 million yen (£19,450).

This award, for a book which took nine years of preparation, has been given to only one other British person and marked a crowning point in Gardner's career.

Kenneth Burslem Gardner attended Alleyn's Grammar School in Stevenage and then University College London. During the Second World War his skills as a linguist led

to his learning Japanese and he was drafted straight into the Intelligence Corps as a captain.

He served in India, Burma and Sumatra from 1943 to 1947, where he interrogated Japanese prisoners and translated captured documents.

He was wounded in Sumatra when a party of three Jeeps was ambushed. His life was saved by a Japanese officer who dragged him into a forest and then conveyed him to a hospital.

After the war Gardner gained first class honours in Japanese from the School of Oriental and African Studies. He then spent most of his working life as a Keeper of printed books and manuscripts at the British Museum — with four years as Principal Keeper — before five libraries were amalgamated to become the British Library. There he became Keeper of Oriental Manuscripts and Printed Books and Japanese specialist.

Gardner was an enthusiastic choral singer and after retiring eight years ago, he was the Japan Society's librarian at the Japanese embassy in London.

Ken Gardner is survived by his wife, whom he married in 1949, and by two sons and two daughters.

THE REV ROBERT LEANEY

The Rev Robert Leaney, biblical scholar and Professor of Theology, University of Nottingham, 1969-74, died on April 5 aged 85. He was born on June 8, 1909.



ROBERT LEANEY made his first impact on biblical studies in 1956, the year he published his monumental study of the Gospel of St Luke. But the book which made his name was his *Penguin Guide to Modern Theology*, published towards the end of a turbulent theological decade in 1970. Designed to pull together the various threads in the debate launched by John Robinson's *Honest to God* (1963), Leaney's paperback had as its objective bridging the gulf between new scholarship and the traditional believer. Through its erudition and its accessibility it largely succeeded in this purpose.

Alfred Robert Clare Leaney was the son of a civil servant working in Birmingham. Very much through his own efforts, he won an exhibition in classics to Hertford College, Oxford, where he took a second in both Mods and Greats. He went on to train for the ministry at Ripon Hall, Oxford, being ordained by the famous "modernist" Bishop of Birmingham, E. W. Barnes, in 1933. After a curacy at Oldbury in the Birmingham diocese, he became vicar of the Sussex village of Mountfield, from where he volunteered to be a chaplain to the forces (he had been a pacifist but changed his mind, largely under the influence of William Temple, then Archbishop of York). He served with the Royal Sussex Regiment and

the end of the war found him in Germany, where he became involved in the restoration of morale among the Protestant clergy who had suffered the indignity of witnessing their leaders become largely subservient to Hitler. (There were exceptions, like Bonhoeffer and Niemöller, but not many.) Back in England, his original patron, Bishop Barnes, gave him the opportunity of combining parish work with academic work in the Warwickshire living of Wishaw. He took an Oxford BD in 1952, having two years earlier joined the staff of Queen's College, Birmingham. His next move was back to his own old college of Ripon Hall, then very much a recruiting agency for the Modern Churchmen's Union. Leaney was sufficient of a sound biblical scholar not to be at all fazed by the rolling waters of theological liberalism and enjoyed his final two years as vice-principal.

In 1956 he left Oxford — though he did not cut all connection with it (the university awarded him a DD in 1966) — to join the staff of the newly-established department of theology at Nottingham University. There he was to spend the rest of his active career, rising from being lecturer when he joined to being professor and head of department when he retired in 1974.

Leaney always wanted to bring the fruits of biblical criticism to the common man, particularly in the light of the 1947 discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls. This discovery animated the endeavour of the historians who for so long had vainly attempted an answer to the common man's question as to what actually happened

in the Palestine of Jesus and John the Baptist. Leaney set to work with a deep passion: whereas the traditional historian had had a small window into 1st-century Palestine, the discovery of the scrolls, he said later, "blew out the side of the whole building". The result was a *Popular Guide to the Scrolls* and in 1966 his monumental work *The Rule of Qumran and its Meaning* as part of the SCM New Testament Library series.

Leaney was hugely energetic and this gave a special character to his later teaching. He combined a passion for investigation with making it intelligible to the layman; he was determined to engage the non-specialist in the discoveries of modern history, archaeology and manuscript research.

He retired to Bath and enjoyed parish work, music-making and setting questions on religion for BBC TV's *Mastermind*. He is survived by his son; his wife died three weeks before he did.

PERSONAL COLUMN

PUBLIC NOTICES

The Annual General Meeting of the British Association of Urological Surgeons will be held at the Royal College of Surgeons, 11, St Andrews Place, Regents Park, London NW1 6AA, on Thursday, 11th May 1995 at 10.00 am. The meeting will be held in the Lecture Theatre, 11, St Andrews Place, Regents Park, London NW1 6AA. The meeting will be held in the Lecture Theatre, 11, St Andrews Place, Regents Park, London NW1 6AA.

LEGAL NOTICES

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the estate of the late Mr. John Smith, who died on 1st May 1994, is being administered by the Executors, Messrs. J. & J. Smith, of 10, St. James's Place, London W1A 1AB. The Executors are Messrs. J. & J. Smith, of 10, St. James's Place, London W1A 1AB. The Executors are Messrs. J. & J. Smith, of 10, St. James's Place, London W1A 1AB.

TRUSTEE ACTS

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OBITUARY

MR. W. G. ROMAINE.

Mr. W. G. Romaine, whose death is announced, had in his time played many parts and played them well. He was the last of the civilians, except Sir Austen Layard and one other person, who were present with the British Army in the Crimea in 1854. Adventurous, fond of travel, a keen observer, high-spirited, zealous in all he undertook, Mr Romaine — who was a barrister without too much practice — when he was appointed as Deputy-Judge-Advocate to the Army of the East, no doubt eagerly abandoned his business for a term or two *animus revertendi*, and set out to accompany Lord Raglan's headquarters at a time when there was little expectation that sanguinary battles, a great siege, and such toils and privations as no English Army had ever been exposed to would involve his absence from profession and family for many weary months. The duties of his office were not onerous. Court-martial was few, generals and officers had something else to think about. But Mr. Romaine made himself exceedingly useful to his chief. Mr. Kinglake, whose friend he was, mentions him several times in terms of well-deserved commendation. After the battle of

ON THIS DAY

May 6 1893

Taking pity on some wounded Russians lying forgotten after the Battle of Alma during the Crimean War, W. G. Romaine got hold of 400lb of biscuits and with others worked ceaselessly to make sure that the injured had food and water. He was a friend of A. W. Kinglake, historian of that war.

The Alma Romaine's exertions on behalf of the wounded are recorded by Mr. Kinglake with much approbation.

"On the day after the battle, the hundreds of Russians who lay wounded on the English part of the field had been brought to a sheltered spot of ground near the river. There they were laid down in rows, paralysed ranks, and in such a manner that the surface they covered with their prostrate bodies was a large, symmetrical oblong. The ground where they lay was at some short distance from the headquarters camp, and but little exposed to

view. From this, it happened that not only the wounded Russians, but also the English soldiers mounting guard at the spot, were forgotten and left without food for many hours. Romaine came to know that these poor wounded Russians were lying unattended, and he judged that, unless they were cared for, there would be a lasting blot upon the honour of the English name. An officer of the common stamp who had got to be possessed with such a feeling would have cheaply discharged his conscience by making a communication to Lord Raglan or some other 'proper authority.' Knowing the weight of cares pressing upon the chief, Romaine did not appeal to Lord Raglan, but began to act himself, giving no repose to any whose aid he needed, but disturbing nobody else. Under the power of his generous indignation and strong will all lethargy slowly gave way; and, having obtained 400lb of biscuits and the number of hands that were needed to aid him in the undertaking, he toiled at his good work until there was no one in all those prostrate ranks of wounded men who had not been tended with the offer of food and water. At the time, his exceeding zeal made him seem to be acting for the honour of some great cause much more than from tender pity; but what he felt he has owned and recorded."

NEWS

Battered Tories in loan rate gamble

John Major and Kenneth Clarke gambled in the wake of the Tories local election disaster by confounding all expectations that they would raise interest rates.

With Conservative MPs in a state of shell-shock after results that surpassed their worst fears, the Chancellor left interest rates at 6.75 per cent. Pages 1, 9, 10, 11

Queen launches VE-Day thanksgiving

The Queen launched a momentous weekend of VE-Day commemorations when she led the nation in a very British thanksgiving for the end of the Second World War. The monarch attended Westminster Hall to receive loyal addresses from both her Houses of Parliament. Page 1

Chirac alarm

The French presidential campaign closed with a last-minute warning from Jacques Chirac that abstainers could be helping the election of Lionel Jospin. Pages 1, 18

School 'hit squad'

Gillian Shephard ordered a "hit squad" of experts to take control of a failing state school for the first time. Page 2

Girl abducted

A girl aged five was abducted, sexually assaulted and dumped 40 miles from her home almost four hours later. Page 5

Legal aid warning

The Government gave a blunt warning to justices' clerks that responsibility for granting criminal legal aid would be removed unless they improved controls. Page 7

£5 million tiger

A magnificent portrait of a tiger by George Stubbs is expected to fetch some £5 million. Page 7

Summer smog blankets the country

The outer London suburb of Bexley became Britain's smog capital as the hot weather and congested roads sent pollution levels soaring. Bexley recorded 255 parts per billion of sulphur dioxide — double the safety limit. The Environment Department predicted that the smog would continue. Pages 1, 3

Prayer mysteries

The clergy still believe in the power of prayer, but God sometimes answers their pleadings in mysterious ways. Page 8

Croatian dispute

As Croat troops consolidated their positions around the Serbian enclave in western Slavonia, a new and damaging dispute erupted between peacekeepers and Croatian authorities. Page 17

Russian pride

Russians will turn out next week to applaud their armed forces, 50 years after the Soviet military stormed Berlin. Page 17

Briton killed

Islamic militants killed five more foreigners in southern Algeria, including one Briton. Page 19

Strained relations

President Clinton flies to Russia on Monday for two-day visit that will highlight a sharp deterioration in relations. Page 19



The Queen, with the Prince of Wales on her right, receives a presentation of address by the Lord Chancellor at Westminster Hall yesterday at a thanksgiving for the end of the war in Europe. Pages 1 and 12-16

OPINION

Victory to defeat

The plotting among Tory MPs has barely begun. Meanwhile, this weekend, they will have to endure the wrath of their local parties. Page 21

Kenneth the brave

Clarke's courage has sometimes seemed akin to the lemmings. Yesterday the value of his well-known robustness was revealed. Page 21

Bishops and bad ears

VE-Day was a triumph for the ordinary men and women who had the lion's heart, as well as of the great ones who gave the roar. Page 21

This country is lifting itself

back into the first division. If it can be achieved, how great the prize. Evening Standard

COLUMNS

Simon Jenkins: A 38 per cent

turnout is a democratic outrage, half the European average in subnational elections. A normal government would worry about this. Page 20

Peter Riddell: Many traditional

Tory supporters may have stayed at home and will return to the fold at the general election. But many may not, and some have already switched to Labour. Page 10

Sir Alastair Pilkington, inventor;

Samuel Gorley, Pater, Warden of Harkness House; Professor Leslie Pyrah, urologist; Rev Robert Leaney, biblical scholar. Page 23

Mortgages. Page 21

BUSINESS

Economy: Kenneth Clarke

said that slowing economic growth and the lack of new inflationary pressures had tipped a decision in favour of leaving interest rates unchanged. Page 25

Executive pay: Sir Geoffrey

Mulcahy, chief executive at Kingfisher has surrendered his membership of the £1 million salary club. Page 25

Ratners: Shareholders of Signet,

the former Ratners jeweller chain, supported the management and overwhelmingly rejected a break-up plan. Page 25

Markets: The FT-SE 100 fell

from 84.4 to 83.6 after a fall from \$1.6178 to \$1.6009 and from DM2.2164 to DM2.1940. Page 28

SPORT

Rugby union: John Hall, the

Bath captain, withdrew from the Pilkington Cup final against Wasps today because of a shoulder injury. It would have been his last match. Pages 40, 48

Cricket: Mark Ramprakash

and John Carr shared a third-wicket partnership of 253 for Middlesex against Hampshire at Lord's. Page 48

Horse racing: An historic weekend,

the first in Britain to have Sunday race meetings with on-course betting, could be capped by a win for Celtic Swing in the 2,000 Guineas. Pages 41, 42, 43, 48

VW-Day: How British officers

saved the Beetle: a rural ride through England

SATURDAY TIMES

MAGAZINE

Whose victory? Within just months joy turned to anxiety: William Rees-Mogg... Page 8
Boxing clever: Rene Benfield challenges the heavyweight view of feminism... Page 16
Rebel for all seasons: The lasting influence of Thomas Paine... Page 25
Fashion: Iain R. Webb on dressing up for the latest dance craze... Page 38
Royal beds: William III's garden at Hampton Court is being restored to its baroque glory... Page 30
House style: Photographs are hanging on every fashionable wall... Page 43
Food & drink: Jonathan Meades, Frances Bissell, and Jane MacQuitty... Pages 47-53

WEEKEND

How to spot a fake: Michael Hall offers a guide to sorting genuine antiques from contemporary articles. Pages 1, 3
Cry of the lonely: Benedict Nightingale applauds Sky-light, David Hare's strong new drama... Page 5
Wild and woolly: Richard Morrison on the wackiest entertainments... Page 5
Grottoes: How the modern cave man gives gardens an attractive highlight... Page 8
Book awards: Judges and authors assess the runners in year's AT&T non-fiction book award. Pages 13, 14
Travel: Follow the Silk Route: pitch a tent near Pisa: dive off the Great Barrier Reef... Pages 20-23

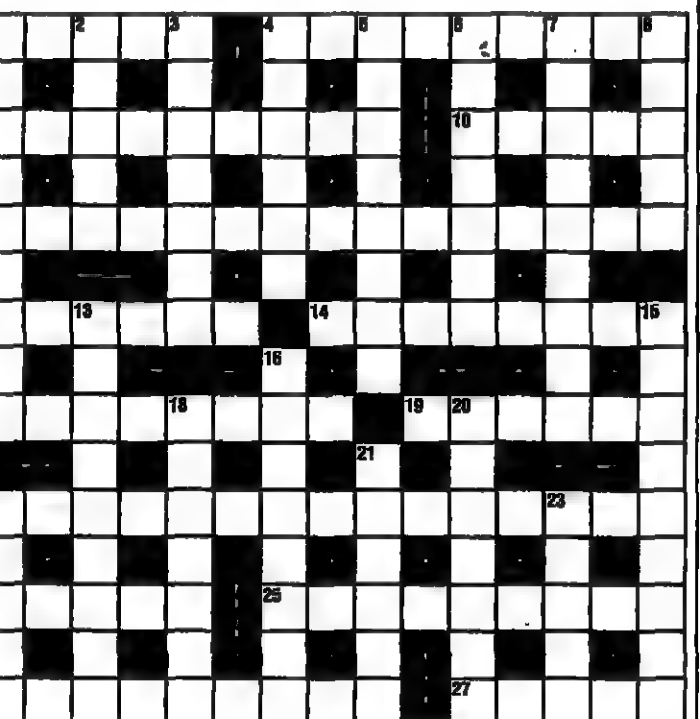
VISION

Glamrock: A night of glittering stars on Channel 4... Page 2
Films: Best of the Bank Holiday movies... Page 4
Victory: VE-Day takes over Radio 4... Page 20
Science: Retired scientists visit their shrine... Page 3

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 19,848

A bottle of Knockando, a superb Speyside Single Malt Scotch whisky, is bottled only when at its peak of perfection rather than as a pre-determined age, together with a fine leather credit card wallet, will be given for the first five correct solutions opened next Thursday. Entries should be addressed to: The Times, Saturday Crossword Competition, PO Box 486, Virginia Street, London E1 9DD. The winners and solution will be published next Saturday.

Name/Address



- ACROSS
- Hesitate to swindle and rook (5).
 - Takes off dress first — original costume (3,6).
 - Drunken sailormen put back on even keel (9).
 - Don't allow little woman an instrument to play (5).
 - Behaving like a dummy, revealing plan (7,4,4).
 - Artist reached around one (6).
 - Crustacean from end of jetty returned if caught by accident (8).
 - Player I spotted in the bridge section (8).
 - One of our houses isn't finished, as usual (6).
 - Individuals possess this personal attribute (7,8).
 - It's a dreadful feeling, being held by gangsters (5).
 - Reckless type's crazy speed, with road needing repair (9).
 - Corruption of street cop revealed to very few (3,6).
 - Gentleman in India returned book one owns (5).
- DOWN
- Part of rifle deer spot (9).
 - Side of sovereign we see when royal head goes down (5).
 - Practical person sporting article in catalogue again (7).
 - From the air, a feature on the Surrey border (6).
 - Leaves railway after novelist (8).
 - My base's relocated in government office (7).
 - Destructive behaviour in museum leaves it somewhat messy, initially (9).
 - Weapon reached a great height, we hear (5).
 - Making accessible an opportunity at the top (7,2).
 - A sweet store to produce cavities? (9).
 - List of names including St. John's, St. Catherine's, and Clare, possibly (8).
 - Fool will, we hear, talk so childishly (7).
 - Poor's work interrupted by king, and later by ambassador (7).
 - Professional model German cheers (6).
 - Round something deviously hidden (5).
 - Get in touch with a head after end of summer (5).

Solution to Puzzle No 19,842



LAST WEEK'S WINNERS: J. M. Benn, Blackheath, London; D. B. Flood, Shrewton, Wiltshire; J. Kirkham, Liverpool; L. W. Thomson, Dunblane, Perthshire; P. H. Millon, Ludlow, Shropshire.

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TIMES WEATHERCAST

For the latest region by region forecast, 24 hours a day, dial 0801 500 followed by the code.

Region	Forecast
Greater London	701
West Midlands	702
East Midlands	703
North East	704
North West	705
Yorkshire & the Humber	706
East of England	707
West of England	708
South East	709
South West	710
Wales	711
Scotland	712
Northern Ireland	713
Republic of Ireland	714
Channel Islands	715
Isle of Man	716
Jersey	717
Guernsey	718
Shetland	719
Falkland Islands	720
South Georgia	721
Antarctica	722

Weathercast is charged at 39p per minute (cheap rate) and 49p per minute at all other times.

ROADWATCH

For the latest AA traffic/roadwatch information, 24 hours a day, dial 0300 401 followed by the code.

Location	Forecast
London & the M25	731
East of London	732
West of London	733
North of London	734
South of London	735
London & the M25	736
East of London	737
West of London	738
North of London	739
South of London	740
London & the M25	741
East of London	742
West of London	743
North of London	744
South of London	745
London & the M25	746
East of London	747
West of London	748
North of London	749
South of London	750

HOURS OF DARKNESS

Today

Location	Forecast
London	751
East of London	752
West of London	753
North of London	754
South of London	755
London & the M25	756
East of London	757
West of London	758
North of London	759
South of London	760

TOMORROW

Location	Forecast
London	761
East of London	762
West of London	763
North of London	764
South of London	765
London & the M25	766
East of London	767
West of London	768
North of London	769
South of London	770

HIGH TIDES

Today

Location	Forecast
London	771
East of London	772
West of London	773
North of London	774
South of London	775
London & the M25	776
East of London	777
West of London	778
North of London	779
South of London	780

TOMORROW

Location	Forecast
London	781
East of London	782
West of London	783
North of London	784
South of London	785
London & the M25	786
East of London	787
West of London	788
North of London	789
South of London	790

HIGHEST & LOWEST

Thursday

Location	Forecast
London	791
East of London	792
West of London	793
North of London	794
South of London	795
London & the M25	796
East of London	797
West of London	798
North of London	799
South of London	800

FORECAST

General situation: much of England and Wales will have another hot, dry and fairly sunny day. Northern countries will be a little cloudier and there is a chance of a scattered shower during the afternoon.

Scotland and Northern Ireland will also have some sunshine, but thicker cloud over western Scotland and Northern Ireland during the afternoon will lead to drizzle or scattered showers, some heavy and persistent. Temperatures will remain very warm over southern areas but again it will be cooler further north.

London, Central S, SE England, E Anglia, E, W Midlands: dry with hazy sunshine. Wind light and variable. Max 25C (82F).

Central N, NE, NW, E England, Lake District: mainly dry with sunny intervals. Wind light and variable. Max 22C (72F).

Channel Isles, SW England, Wales: dry and clear with sunny spells. Wind light and variable. Max 24C (75F).

Isle of Man, SW Scotland, Glasgow, Argyll, N Ireland: sunny intervals, becoming cloudy, possible rain later. Wind southeast light to moderate. Max 19C (66F).

Borders, Edinburgh & Dundee, Aberdeen, Central Highlands, Moray Firth: dry and clear with sunny intervals. Wind east to southeast light. Max 18C (64F).

NE, NW Scotland, Orkney, Shetland: mainly dry with sunny intervals, cloudy later. Wind southwest moderate. Max 16C (61F).

Outlook: the hot spell should cool as thundery showers cross the country tomorrow. Monday will be fresher and cooler nearly everywhere with sunshine and showers.

AROUND BRITAIN

24 hrs to 5 pm: b=brilliant; c=cloud; d=drizzle; ds=drizzle storm; ds=drizzle; h=heavy; l=light; m=moderate; o=overcast; s=sunny; w=windy; x=variable.

Forecast for 24 hours to 5 pm: b=brilliant; c=cloud; d=drizzle; ds=drizzle storm; ds=drizzle; h=heavy; l=light; m=moderate; o=overcast; s=sunny; w=windy; x=variable.

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When N&P's chief stopped running and took the train

Conner weathering another storm of controversy

BUSINESS EDITOR Lindsay Cook

SATURDAY MAY 6 1995

BY MELVYN MARCKUS
CITY EDITOR

The European Court's decision to delay its hearing, originally scheduled for May 23, reflects the Government's insistence that the appeal by the "Guinness Four", referred by Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, to the

by D11 inspectors was "oppressive" and "substantially impaired" Saunders' ability to defend himself against criminal charges. Saunders, according to the Commission, was thus "deprived of a fair hearing". Although the European Court has heard to

event, Mr Saunders, Mr Konson and Mr Parnes all served prison sentences. Mr Lyons was spared a 30-month jail sentence because of ill-health but was stripped of his knighthood in March 1991.

that denied the defendants access to certain documents in the Government's possession. In view of the delays to date, Mr Saunders would clearly have preferred a swift hearing in Strasbourg.

BY JANET BUSH
ECONOMICS
CORRESPONDENT

policy action — including interest rate rises in December and February and tax increases in April — were still working their way through and that he would wait and see what their impact on the economy will be.

statement at yesterday's press conference did not mention the recent weakness of sterling. Bank of England concerns about the potentially inflationary impact of a falling pound, revealed in the minutes of the March 8 meeting, had fuelled speculation that rates would be raised.

US Treasury bond market which leapt on evidence of a slowing recovery provided by falling US non-farm payrolls and higher unemployment.

The Chancellor announced his decision yesterday

Kingfisher's annual accounts also confirm that the group paid £3 million in compensation to four ousted directors including James

former partner at Coopers & Lybrand, has been acting finance director since joining the group in February. The shares fell 3p to 467p.

BY OUR ECONOMICS STAFF

Similarly 3,534 companies were declared insolvent in the first quarter of 1995, 2 per cent down on the previous quarter

showing down both its companies and individuals. However, it is encouraging to see that there is a drop of 22.5 per cent over the same quarter last year."

By SARAH BAGNALL

meeting with a view to seek out purchasers for its constituent parts immediately. Signer runs H Samuel and Ernest Jones in the UK and Sterling in the US. The rebels said their

Jim McAdam, chairman, said the board opposed the rebels' plan because it was "commercially unsound and potentially damaging for the group".

Signet's shares rose 1/2p to 14p.

BY LEZ DOLAN

The average worker now sleeps just seven hours and 12 minutes, compared with seven hours and 36 minutes in 1990. At that rate, today's school leavers will be down to not much more than two hours a

A research paper published in 1975 claimed the time that people slept each night had fallen by 1½ hours in the 50 years to 1960. "People got quite worried then too," said Ms Harrison, "but sleeping less isn't necessarily something to worry about. It depends how it's done."

Although more and more women are joining the workforce, parents now spend more hours actively caring for their children than they did 20 or 30 years ago, the researchers say. Little wonder that the sleeping time has had to give.



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INTERNATIONAL GROWTH Mercury International Opportunities Fund	2nd	2nd
INTERNATIONAL FIXED INTEREST Mercury Global Bond Fund	1st	2nd*
COMMODITY & ENERGY Mercury Gold & General Fund	1st	1st

Source: Micropal. Based on offer to bid prices with net income reinvested to 1/5/95.

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Grumpy and the House of Warburg

The City remains Europe's pre-eminent financial centre but, as far as investment banking goes, it is set to become the undisputed playhouse of the US and European houses. The handing over of the keys of the House that Sir Siegmund Warburg built after the Second World War will, barring the emergence of a UK counter bidder, set the seal on such matters.

Comment on the affairs of Warburg is inevitably diverse, not least because the said House has once again been forced to effectively muzzle itself. Unmuzzled rivals enjoy varying perspectives: they would, wouldn't they? After all, post Big Bang, Warburg has knocked all-comers in the UK into an M&A and equity research-shaped cocked hat. Like it or not, Warburg is the premier home-grown franchise in the City. Sir David Scholey's unenviable task is to protect that franchise. Time is no longer on his side.

As *The Wall Street Journal* put it, in response to official confirmation that Swiss Bank Corporation is

talking takeover with Warburg, excluding the 75 per cent stake in Mercury Asset Management, such a deal would represent "the most significant loss of independence by a UK financial firm to date".

For Scholey, who masterminded the integration of SG Warburg, Rowe & Pitman, Akroyd & Smithers and Mullens in the mid-Eighties, the passing of the keys to a relative pretender in UK corporate finance will prove a painful procedure. Swiss Bank's most recent claim to M&A fame related to clashes with the UK regulatory authorities over its derivative juggling in support of Trafalgar House's £1.2 billion abortive takeover bid for Northern Electric. Ironically, it was Swiss Bank that waited the loudest when Enterprise, advised by Warburg in its ill-fated £1.5 billion Lasmo sortie, shelved out £160 million worth of cash for a 10 per cent stake, mostly in the direction of Phillips & Drew Fund Management. As it happens, PDEM is an offshoot of Union Bank of Switzerland, the tallest gnome that looks down on Credit Suisse.

SBC, stripped of its triple-A credit ratings by Moody's some years ago and by Standard & Poor's a matter of weeks ago, ranks a distant third. As advisers to Transmanche Link, constructors of the Channel Tunnel, SBC also clashed with Euroroute's advisers, one of which was Warburg. One way or another, SBC is perceived as a sort of Alpine version of Grumpy. Not that anyone called Snow White ever made much of a mark in the City.

That said, the nightmare scenario for Scholey is for SBC, like Morgan Stanley before it, to walk. Last week's defection of the quartet spearheading Warburg's European equities operation to Morgan Grenfell was a serious loss, as was the exit of the joint heads of equity capital markets, to the same house, in February. Morgan Grenfell, it will be recalled, was rescued from a barrel of Guinness by Deutsche Bank, now intent on procuring new talent. Sitting in the hot seat, Scholey would appreciate that the loss of two suitors would smack of more than carelessness. It can safely



MELVYN MARCKUS

be assumed, therefore, that Warburg would not have requested shareholders to hold their breath for a second time unless SBC appeared distinctly hot to trot. Warburg's subsequent warning that profits for 1994-95 will be "very significantly" below market forecasts will have come as no surprise to SBC: petticoats have a way of being raised long before nuptials are announced.

SBC's due diligence, spearheaded by accountants Arthur Andersen, is well under way and word has it that takeover terms may be thrashed out by mid-week. All things being equal, Warburg might choose to bring forward its 1994-95 results, promised by May 25. The received wisdom is that Warburg's investment banking operations will be lucky to break even, the solitary cushion being a £90 million share of MAM's anticipated pre-tax profits of around £120 million.

As was all too apparent when Morgan Stanley arrived on the scene, Warburg has excelled in the UK but has failed to cut the mustard on Wall Street — jackpot territory for the premier league investment houses. Bearing in mind that Warburg has been working off a capital base of just £1.5 billion this is hardly surprising. But the inadequacy of Warburg's balance sheet was as apparent in the mid-Eighties as it is now. With the benefit of hindsight, management should have addressed the problem earlier or reigned in the firm's global ambi-

tions. A low capital base and a high-cost base is a dangerous mix and, in the event, 15 months of turbulent financial markets have forced Warburg to put up the "for sale" sign. Grumpy, with shareholders' funds of \$14 billion, has come knocking at the door.

Retrenchment, in the wake of Morgan Stanley's reigning in of ambition, has been fast, furious and expensive. Warburg's decision to pull out of Eurobonds in January was followed by a cutback in derivatives operations and the firm's withdrawal from US domestic equities. Barings demise in February clearly took its toll at Warburgs which, along with several other City banks, has discovered that the winding down of derivative operations can prove a costly exercise. Nick Leeson's losses of around \$1.3 billion remain something of a record but that is not to say that "error accounts" are solely the province of Barings' trading experience in derivatives.

It is too late, however, for Warburg to revert to a small-is-beautiful

philosophy. Mercury Asset Management may harbour such a perspective but, once again, Warburg's management can be faulted for controlling 75 per cent of MAM's and acting as if it controls 25 per cent. In the event, MAM's management, which could have contributed more to the whole, was permitted to go native.

Scholey, who must be focussing on a take-out price of upwards of £800 million, can take comfort from the fact that UBS's acquisition of Phillips & Drew and Credit Suisse's joint venture with First Boston augur well for the proposed amalgam.

Less comfort can be taken from the fact that Warburg's costs have clearly escalated out of control. It is interesting to note that in 1993-94, when Warburg's pre-tax profits amounted to some £297 million, directors pay, including pension costs, soared from £5.6 million to £10.7 million. In 1993, the directors of ICI managed to get by with an overall figure, including pension costs, of £2.5 million.

Warburg and SBC discuss bid price and tax difficulties

By PATRICIA TEHAN, BANKING CORRESPONDENT

A FORMAL offer for SG Warburg's investment banking business is expected to come from Swiss Bank Corporation next week.

Legal and financial advisers for Warburg, Mercury Asset Management, its 75 per cent-owned fund manager, and SBC will spend the weekend locked in negotiations over the price and on finding a tax-efficient way of distributing Warburg's MAM shares to its shareholders.

Analysts are predicting that SBC is unlikely to pay much more than net asset value for the business, which values it at £750 million, or 340p a share. This would make it one of the cheapest acquisitions in merchant banking history, according to Chris Smith of James Capel, and "would attract other players in".

Anthony Davis, a tax partner at City solicitors Lovell White Durrant, said: "War-

burg must be sitting on a massive capital gain in relation to its banking business and in its shares in MAM."

If Warburg were to do the simplest thing and sell the investment bank for cash and distribute the MAM shares to its shareholders, it would be liable for capital gains tax both on the cash it received and on the market value of the shares distributed.

Shareholders could also find themselves liable for tax on any cash dividend.

Mr Davis said: "The most likely scheme would involve a partitioning of the businesses in the course of a liquidation, with shares in the investment bank going to SBC and shares in MAM going to existing Warburg shareholders."

He added: "There are other routes they will have no doubt considered such as a statutory demerger."

Martin Cross, banking ana-

lyst with UBS, said he believed that if SBC paid book value for Warburg it would be paying too much. Warburg put out a profit warning on Wednesday, the day after it said it was in talks with SBC. Analysts expect a loss from its investment banking operations of between £80 million and £13 million.

Mr Cross said the investment banking business was not likely to turn around entirely in the current year. "They are destroying value," he said. He added that there could be some sort of special dividend paid by Warburg to SBC. "In acquisitions there are indemnities and clawbacks" he said.

He said that if the deal was at net asset value and if the 75 per cent stake in MAM was shared out at current prices, the deal would be worth 890p per share to Warburg shareholders.



Ken Jackson announced a maintained total dividend

O'Reilly buys 28% stake in NZ group

By MARTIN BARROW

TONY O'Reilly, the Irish businessman, has further expanded his global media interests with the acquisition of a 28.3 per cent stake in the largest newspaper publisher in New Zealand.

Independent Newspapers, the Irish newspaper group where Mr O'Reilly is chairman, and Mr O'Reilly's family trust have jointly acquired the stake in Wilson & Horton from Brierley Investments for NZ\$292.7 million (about £123 million).

The purchase will be funded by raising a mixture of non-recourse debt and vendor financing, with the balance being contributed by the shareholders.

W&H has a market value of NZ\$930 million. Its flagship title, the *New Zealand Herald*, has a daily circulation of about 245,000 copies. The company also publishes eight provincial newspapers and a number of community newspapers.

Group profits in the year to the end of March are estimated at NZ\$77.3 million, rising from a reported NZ\$63.8 million in the previous 12 months. Yesterday, the company said a special dividend of NZ\$1.50 a share will be paid on or before June 30.

Profits in the current year are forecast to rise to between NZ\$100 million and NZ\$105 million.

Liam Healy, chief executive of Independent Newspapers, said: "Wilson & Horton has a strong market position, large and high-quality cash flow and is part of a stable and strong national economy."

Mr Healy, who will be one of two nominees of Independent Newspapers to join the board of W&H, said significant growth in profits was anticipated.

Canadian airliner was seized legally

THE European Court of Human Rights yesterday ruled that there had been no breaches of human rights when British Customs and Excise Commissioners seized an Air Canada jet at Heathrow in 1987 after one of its containers was found to hold a staggering 331 kilograms of cannabis resin. No criminal charges have been brought as a result of the discovery, but on May 1 Customs officers seized the jet as liable to forfeiture under the Customs Act 1979 and returned it the same day to the airline after it stumped up £50,000.

Later that year, Air Canada challenged the assertion that the plane was liable to forfeiture. The airline won a High Court case challenging the decision but lost it on appeal. Leave to appeal to the House of Lords was refused and Air Canada launched its case in Europe during 1991. The European Court of Human Rights said yesterday in its ruling: "Taking into account the large quantity of drugs found in the container, its street value, as well as the value of the aircraft, the requirement to pay £50,000 was not disproportionate to the aim of preventing the importation of prohibited drugs into the United Kingdom."

Du Pont to raise \$1.1bn

DU PONT, the US chemicals manufacturer, is to raise \$1.114 billion through a share offer to repay short-term debt to redeem 156 million shares held by Seagram, the drinks group. Du Pont is offering 17 million ordinary shares at \$65.50 a share through US and international public offerings co-ordinated by CS First Boston. In April Du Pont agreed to pay \$10 billion to buy back a 24 per cent stake from Seagram, which wanted to raise money to acquire MCA, the Hollywood studio, from Japan's Matsushita.

Smurfit bid set to win

JEFFERSON SMURFIT'S £58 million bid for Papeteries du Limousin, the French papermaker, looked certain to succeed after Emin Leydier said it would not raise its rival offer. Ireland's Smurfit launched a Fr500 a share cash bid for Limousin on April 25, topping Emin Leydier's Fr450 bid. The French stock exchange has approved Smurfit's bid. Undertakings to accept the offer have been received in respect of 47 per cent of Limousin's share capital. Acceptances of more than 75 per cent are needed before it goes unconditional.

Grampian widens vote

GRAMPIAN TELEVISION, the independent television company that broadcasts in the north of Scotland, proposes to enfranchise the non-voting A shares. Holders of voting shares will receive a three for one offer to compensate for the dilution of voting rights. An extraordinary meeting after the annual meeting will be asked to approve the scheme. Grampian also announced the acquisition of Border Television's 37 per cent holding in Central Scotland Radio for £245,000. Grampian's A shares rose 9p to 315p.

Hopkinsons falls into red

HOPKINSONS, the abrasives and engineering group, slipped into the red after substantial restructuring costs. The incurred losses of £153,000 before tax in the year to January 31 compared with a taxable profit of £654,000 in the previous 12 months.

Ken Jackson, chief executive, said that in spite of the fall into the red, the group is holding the total dividend payout at 1.3p on losses per share of 0.27p against earnings previously of 1.18p. A final dividend of 0.8p a share will be paid July 31.

Thrills and spills of the Ken and Eddie Show

THE Treasury and the Bank of England always knew that there were risks in establishing a more open way of making interest-rate policy.

The decision to publish full minutes of the monthly monetary meetings between Kenneth Clarke and Eddie George, at which monetary policy decisions are made, would put both under pressure to come up with the right judgments. For the first time, the Bank's advice to the Chancellor was made public, albeit six weeks after the event.

Both Chancellor and Governor would be exposed to public scrutiny of the quality of their arguments and judgment. That, they agreed, was a price worth paying because open debate would cut out some of the more excessive speculation about policy that has surrounded their relationship in the past.

The other unwelcome consequence of the new openness was the intense interest in the markets and media in the monthly gatherings. It is certainly true that what is a fairly technical, serious discussion of economics between specialists has attracted enormous publicity: the press calls it "The Ken and Eddie Show".

One Treasury official said recently: "The over-analysis is a bit wearisome. Reporters have taken to door stepping the meetings. If they go on for an hour and five minutes, it is a bust up. If it goes on for 45

Janet Bush on the monthly meeting between Governor and Chancellor

minutes, everything is sweet and light."

The authorities were sufficiently concerned about such things that they had a long practice run. Chancellor and Governor met, minutes were written but not published. In April last year, Mr Clarke and Mr George held a joint press conference at the Treasury and published minutes for meetings already held in January, February and March.

The February meeting produced the first example of disagreement. Mr Clarke had wanted and got a rate cut. The Governor was opposed. The Treasury and the Bank wanted to see whether the market was likely to have been unsettled. They concluded that six weeks is a long time in the markets and the meeting was old news. They then made their new system public. Both Mr Clarke and Mr George committed themselves to a full and honest account of the meetings, to secure market trust in the process. There are two exceptions to this general approach. It was agreed that sterling and fiscal policy, acutely sensitive to the financial markets, could legitimate-

ly be left out of the minutes. The monthly monetary meeting is the culmination of a series of meetings. Clutches of specialists from Whitehall and Threadneedle Street meet well beforehand to swap notes on matters such as money supply movements.

Then, just a day or two before the main event, top officials from both institutions meet to finalise the views on each side. Sir Terence Burns, Permanent Secretary, leads the Treasury team, which also includes Alan Budd, head of macro-economics and Gus O'Donnell, who recently rejoined the Treasury after a stint as John Major's press secretary.

For the Bank, Rupert Penant-Rea headed the team until he resigned as deputy-governor. Another regular is Mervyn King, head of economics at the Bank.

At the monetary meeting, all these officials and Treasury ministers Anthony Nelson and Jonathan Aitken gather in the Chancellor's room. Mr George reads from a prepared statement of the Bank's position, which ensures absolutely accurate minutes. Then the Chancellor replies with his position.

It is something of a curiosity that the Governor's remarks are always more lengthy than the Chancellor's, given that Mr Clarke makes the ultimate decision on interest rates.

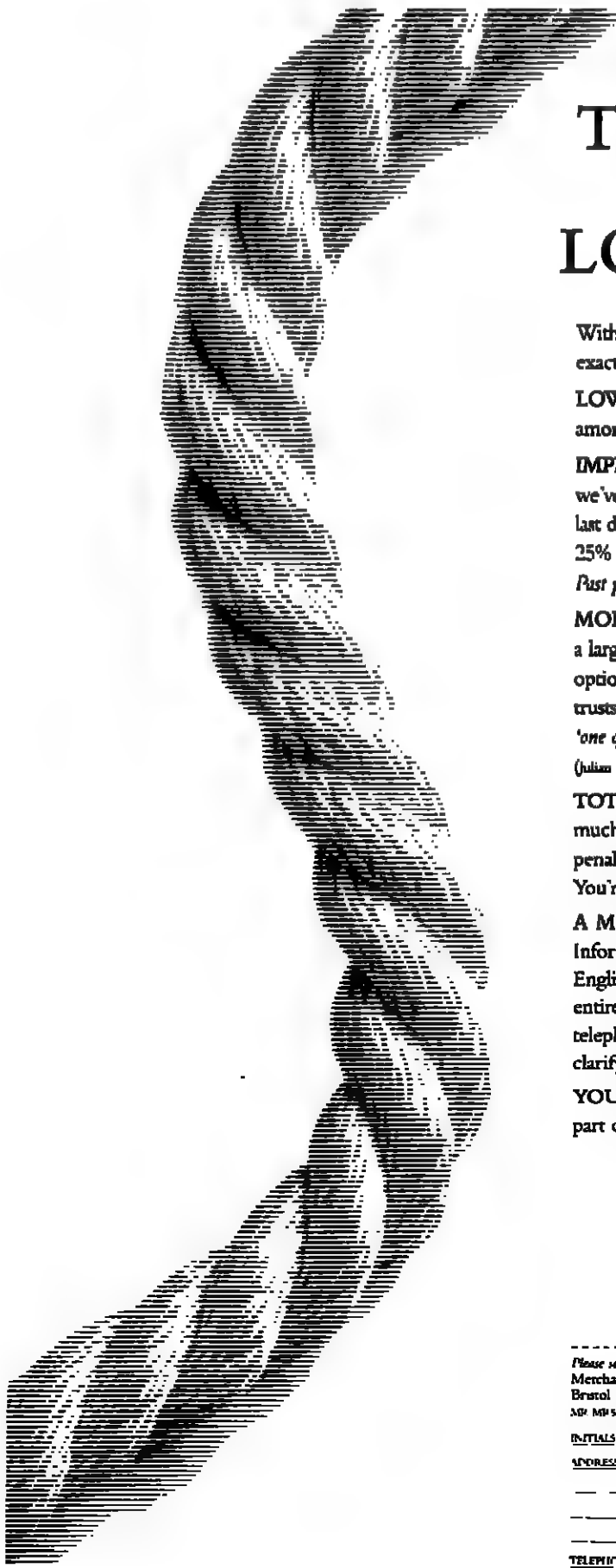
TOURIST RATES

	Bank	Bank
	Buy	Sell
Australia \$	2.22	2.11
Belgium Sch	16.52	16.18
Canada \$	46.70	44.48
Denmark Kr	2.30	2.14
France Fr	6.54	6.38
Germany DM	2.37	2.18
Greece Dr	376.00	354.00
Hong Kong \$	13.11	12.71
India Ru	7.25	6.95
Italy Lire	2,298.00	2,200.00
Japan Yen	150.00	149.00
Malta	0.600	0.595
Netherlands Gld	2.20	2.09
Norway Kr	10.56	9.79
Portugal Esc	204.00	227.50
S Africa Rd	16.45	16.15
Spain Ptas	204.00	191.00
Sweden Kr	12.29	11.48
Switzerland Fr	1.00	1.78
Turkey Lira	new	6912.00
USA \$	1.710	1.690

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STOCK MARKET

MICHAEL CLARK

Investors on the receiving end of a double whammy

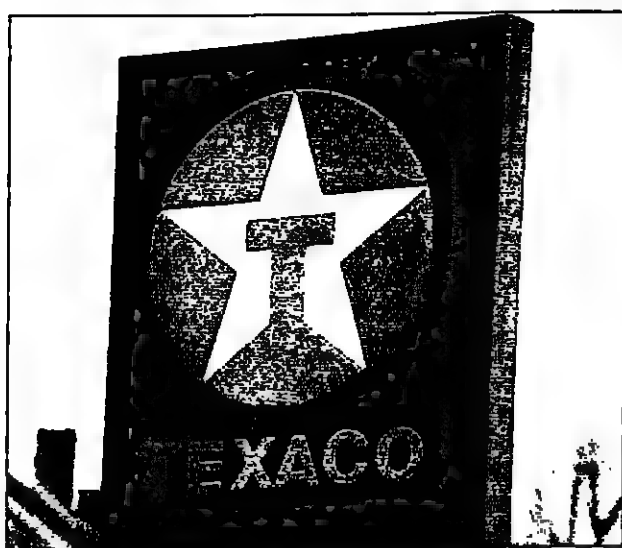
INVESTORS were looking decidedly punch-drunk after finding themselves on the receiving end of the Government's double whammy. It was a foregone conclusion that the Conservatives would take a beating in the local government elections, but the extent of the rout shocked both brokers and investors alike. The decision of the Chancellor to peg interest rates, when all the pundits had been predicting a half-point rise, also came as a shock. But with the bank holiday weekend looming and some healthy profits under their belts, most City folk chose to make the most of the sunny weather and headed early for home.

As a result, share prices held up relatively well to the news on the political front and further falls in the pound. Selling pressure was light and the FT-SE 100 index ended just 12.6 down at 3,251.7, a rise on the week of 35 points.

SG Warburg put in a late advance as speculative buyers pushed the price a further 15p higher to 842p. Brokers say details of the Swiss Bank offer for Warburg's investment banking arm will be revealed next week and could be worth more than 900p a share. However, this is some way below earlier expectations that preceded this week's profits warning, the third in seven months. Hopes of an all-out counterbid now seem remote. Nevertheless, Warburg's quoted offer, gained an extra 9p to 897p.

Bazell, the packaging group, firmed 4p to 193p cheered by an upbeat trading statement. The group told brokers at a presentation in New York on Thursday that results at its paper and plastics business in the US during the first quarter were above expectations. Prior increases had been seen in the second half of last year and overall performance was in excess of last year.

Brokers have also been singing the praises of Morgan Crucible following several visits to the company. The shares yield 5 per cent and look attractive with margins set to grow in the next year, or two. However, it failed to be reflected in the share price, which closed unchanged at 340p. Talk of a company visit also lifted BBA Group 3p to 216p. ICI ended up ahead at 477p. It saw an early lead trimmed



Frost Group is rumoured to be buying Texaco stations

after it emerged that its agreed £180 million acquisition of Grow Group, the US paint producer, could turn into an auction. Sherwin Williams, a rival, now seems to have thrown its hat into the ring, lifting shares of Grow Group sharply higher on Wall Street. They now stand more than a dollar higher than the \$18.10 offered by ICI.

BAT Industries finished 2p firmer at 474p amid claims that RJR Nabisco, a rival, is ready to raise its cigarette brands by 4 cents a packet. Earlier this week, BAT unveiled a strong set of first-quarter figures supported by a first time contribution from its American Tobacco acquisitions.

Fisons firmed 1 1/2p to 188 1/2p. The company says it can call on funds totalling £1 billion with which to make acquisitions, but insists that investors should not expect news of an imminent bid for Medeva. The two sides have been locked in talks for some time. Medeva was unchanged at 242p, with the market already putting a price tag on any deal at more than £900 million.

Recent disposals have enabled Fisons to build up a war chest totalling £500 million, but the group refuses to rule out a possible rights issue to further bolster its coffers. Speaking to institutional investors at a health conference arranged by Lehman Brothers, the US securities house, Stuart Walls, chief executive, said that Fisons was in talks

with a number of companies. Signet, the old Ratners jewellery chain, firmed 1 1/2p to 14p after a meeting called by preference shareholders failed to find support for a plan to sell off bits of the business in order to finance their dividend payments. The plan was rejected by more than 70 per cent of shareholders. James McAdam, chairman, said: "Until we have a cake, there is

no point in discussing how to cut up the pieces". Visitec, the electronic components group, fell 1 1/2p to 12p after confirming that profits for the full year would be sharply down on the previous year. The company blamed higher than expected restructuring costs, a writedown of property values and a loss on the disposal of its insurance services business. The dividend will be maintained.

News of a substantial increase in sales during the first quarter lifted Psion, the pocket computer group, 7p to 324p. David Foster, chairman, said demand for the group's products remained strong with both net and gross margins ahead of last year.

Frost Group marked time at 271p amid mounting speculation that it is putting together a major acquisition. Word is the group plans to buy certain assets belonging to the Texaco oil giant in this country, including a number of petrol stations. Brokers say the deal could double the size of Frost, which already operates 240 sites in this country. That compares with the 1,200 sites owned by Texaco, 560 of which are owned by the company itself.

GILT-EDGED: Prices came off sharply following the decision to peg interest rates at current levels. Losses at one stage stretched to more than 1 1/2p with the longer end of the market bearing the brunt of the setback. Prices rallied with the short-end after the market sporting gains on the day after being reassured that a further rise can be ruled out in the short term. The best gains were seen among index-linked issues which sported rises of more than 1 1/2p.

In futures, the June series of the long gilt touched £104 1/2 before ending £1 1/2 easier at £104 1/2, as the number of contracts completed surged to 100,000. Among conventional issues Treasury 8 per cent 2013 lost 1/2p to 59 1/2, while the shorter end clearly benefited from renewed support with Treasury 8 per cent 2000 finishing four ticks better at 59 1/2.

NEW YORK: Investors on Wall Street turned cautious over concern that the economy was slowing. By midday the Dow Jones Industrial average was 7.61 points down at 4,352.05.

MAJOR INDICES

New York (midday):
Dow Jones 4352.05 (-7.61)
S&P Composite 520.85 (-0.31)

Tokyo:
Nikkei Average Closed

Hong Kong:
Hang Seng 8332.17 (+12.42)

Amsterdam:
BOE Index Closed

Sydney:
All Ordinaries 2065.9 (+0.7)

Frankfurt:
DAX 2023.83 (-20.98)

Singapore:
Straits 2058.80 (+1.18)

Brussels:
General 7535.03 (-10.62)

Paris:
CAC-40 1927.41 (-18.78)

Zurich:
SIX Gen 619.50 (+2.90)

London:
FT 30 2472.4 (-14.3)

FT 100 3251.7 (-12.6)

FTSE Mid 250 3555.1 (-4.9)

FTSE All-Share 1614.4 (-15.4)

FTSE Eurotrack 100 1329.01 (-4.36)

FT All-Share 1595.73 (-4.65)

FT Non-Financials 1722.88 (-4.66)

FT Financials 1113.32 (-0.08)

FT Govt Secs 92.47 (+0.05)

Burgundy 273.20

SEAQ Volume 561.2m

USM (Datastream) 152.60 (+0.42)

USM 1.6009 (-0.0196)

German Mark 2.1940 (-0.0224)

Exchange Index 83.6 (+0.8)

Bank of England Official Call (4pm)

LECU 1.1854

LSDR 1.0261

RPI 147.3 Mar (3.5%) Jan 1997-100

RECENT ISSUES

Blocomp Intl (170) 171 ...

Brit Aero Cap Uts p/p 725 -1

Dumyat IT CY AN Div 105 ...

Dumyat IT Mthly Div 105 ...

Edinburgh Japan Trl C 102 ...

Finsbury World Pharm 101 ...

ForCo Spec Utl (100) 100 ...

General Cable (90) 170 -6 1/2

Ivory/Sime Disc Uts 495 +2

Oryx India 650 ...

Oryx India Wts 250 ...

Precoat Intl (125) 136 +3

Schroder Inc Grth Fd 105 ...

Schroder Inc Grth Wts 27 ...

Scott Orient Smir (100) 100 ...

RIGHTS ISSUES

Bolton Group n/p (23) ...

Roskel n/p (92) 11 ...

MAJOR CHANGES

RISES:

Nat Aust Bank 5330 (-13p)

SG Warburg 8420 (-15p)

Henrys 3910 (-11p)

Telecom 4770 (-14p)

Isoton 2500 (-12p)

Thom EMI 11910 (+13p)

Unipol 1840 (+14p)

Cantab Pharm 1330 (-30p)

Low & Bonar 4850 (+8p)

Macfarlane 2610 (+11p)

Senco Group 2740 (+10p)

Ramco Energy 3810 (+12p)

Sage Group 9450 (-10p)

FALLS:

General Accident 569p (-8p)

Granada 5640 (-8p)

Savoy Hotel A 8200 (-10p)

Carlton Comm 9550 (-8p)

Scotish 5180 (-11p)

Sotheby 8130 (-12p)

Micro Focus 7080 (-22p)

Tibbet & Britten 5180 (-7p)

Closing Prices Page 37

TEMPUS

Surprise, surprise

HELL hath no fury like an analyst scorned, especially if clients' money is running on it. Hence, yesterday's City talk of the Bank being stabbed in the back, as if this were the first time Eddie George had failed to prevail over the Treasury on the timing of rate changes.

There were three reasons to move yesterday: to satisfy financial market expectations, to bolster sterling and to hasten the first rate out of the upswing. None had much to do with the domestic economy or inflation targets. On those tests, there was no pressing need for a rise and therefore no argument for one when the statistical signals were so confused. Better wait a month, or two if the Chancellor can bear for the minutes of yesterday's meeting to come out first.

For the real (and political) economy, and for gilt-edged, Kenneth Clarke's important message was that rates were near their cyclical peak. That may be news to markets. It is news to medium-sized companies or would-be homebuyers dithering over medium-term investments. Their decisions are vital to the third phase of economic recovery.

The pound's strong reaction to official inaction owed something to the straight line of expected short-term income, more to than covering speculative disappointment. Those influences, so embarrassing to the analysts, should be short-lived. More worrying is that bored currency hunters could turn their firepower on sterling, reckoning that it is open season until the next Clarke/George meeting. If so, the Chancellor will need more nerve than yesterday and the Bank will need to make clear to markets that it is not sullen, resentful or warring with politicians.

Cantab Pharm

THERE is no doubt that biotechnology is highly risky. For every one new drug discovered, dozens fail by the wayside. The story differs little for the companies that make them. Ever since the flood of fledgling biotech companies floated on the stock market, the City has been holding its breath waiting for the first horror story to emerge.

Cantab seems to fit the bill. In March, it pulled its most promising drug from development and its shares nose-dived. Yesterday, it drafted Inlethman Brothers to help to defuse its fate from a range of options, including collaborations, joint ventures or an outright sale.

The for sale sign immediately breathed life into the flagging share price which gained 30p to end the day at 133p. This is a far cry from the 460p at which the shares were placed in October 1993. The current share price is entirely supported by the group's cash resources. At the end of March, Cantab had a net cash position of £13.5 million - just ahead of its market capitalisation to £13.2 million.

The value of the company's research and its drug pipeline are not reflected in the shares. Given that the company needs a deal to support the development of its anti-viral drugs, any interested party should be able to dictate terms. The hope for shareholders is that the surviving parts of the business are attractive enough to entice more than one bidder.

Woolworth and Superdrug

But there is a gaping hole in the long-term strategy for Woolworth, the core of the group which still needs to find its high street niche. Woolworth boasts more than 12 million customers and £1.3 billion in sales, but growth was minimal last year and it is suffering stiff competition in music, toys and children's clothes from the likes of WH Smith, Argos and BHS.

THE abolition of shareholder apathy is a lengthy process and as each company enforces its non-voting stock the same banal remarks are made by directors about taking the company forward. Indeed, few would choose to describe an extension of the democratic process as a retrograde step but in the case of Grampian TV, the move is not without risk.

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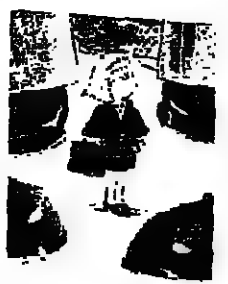
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Investing in female-friendly companies

WEEKEND MONEY

LIQUID ASSETS 34

How to put £50 or £200 a month to work



Running for cover in tax debacle

Robert Miller and Sara McConnell look at this week's row over payment protection insurance

An arcane piece of 19th-century legislation lay behind this week's noisiest political row. The disclosure in *The Times* that the Government was proposing to collect tax on the payments made under mortgage payment protection policies to the jobless and the sick led to a ministerial U-turn of record speed.

Within hours of the appearance of the report, the Treasury issued a statement saying that the payments would not, after all, be subject to tax. In the interim, ministers had either denied the existence of any such plans, or spoken of a review under way into the tax position of these payments.

The first intimation that the Government had mortgage protection policies in its sights came in a March letter to the Council of Mortgage Lenders from Roger Evans, an Under Secretary of State for Social Security, a copy of which has been seen by *The Times*. This stated categorically that payments were subject to tax and that insurance firms paying out under these policies would have to act as tax collectors.

This opinion was based on obscure Victorian laws. The Council of Mortgage Lenders together with the Association of British Insurers were shocked by the implications of Mr Evans's ruling. Not only would the taxation hit the two million-plus homeowners with mortgage protection cover but also the new borrowers who will be compelled by the new income support rules to buy this insurance. In October, under a controversial measure, state

Tax shock for sick or jobless homeowners

How *The Times* broke the story this week

help to the unemployed homeowner will be severely restricted. The CML predicted the "tax bombshell" would further damage the ailing housing market.

Then, as the week progressed and the row refused to die down, it was confirmed that a tax threat also hung over anyone taking out cover for any other kind of debt, such as personal loans from banks and building societies and credit cards.

Consumers pay £1 billion a year in premiums to buy loan protection insurance. Ironically, they are already paying insurance premium tax at 2.5 per cent on their contributions. The harassed Chancellor, who earlier in the week admitted he had never even heard of the taxation of regular income payouts, was forced to make yet another statement. This time, however, his words were not so conciliatory.

As a result, this week ten million people with personal loan and credit card cover are realising that they could still face paying tax at their highest rate on benefits from payment protection policies should they ever be so unfortunate as to have to claim. Their fate now depends on a series of talks

between the Revenue and the insurance industry starting next Tuesday. But how does this payment protection insurance work? We put the key questions to Marjorie Bevan, Abbey National's expert.

Q Back to basics. What is a payment protection policy and how does it work?

A It pays out if you take out a loan then fall ill or lose your job and cannot make the repayments. Payment protection policies are sold to cover mortgages, personal loans and credit card debts. Generally, you pay a monthly premium for insurance on top of your loan repayment, but in some cases personal loan cover allows you to pay a one-off premium at the outset.

Q What is the price and what are the benefits?

A These policies are not cheap (see box) and their benefits are limited. For example, you will normally have to wait two or three months after you claim before the policy starts paying out. Then the policy may pay out for only 12 months, particularly if you are claiming after being made redundant. If you are claiming because you are ill, you may get payouts for up to three years, but pre-existing medical conditions will exclude you. Some mortgage protection policies offer a fixed benefit so when interest rates change you must contact the insurer. If rates go down you will pay less for your cover, but if they rise, you will pay more. Borrowers with a fixed or discounted mortgage will need to be particularly watchful because they could be wrong-footed by rate changes and left with insufficient cover.

Q How will the Chancellor now deal with mortgage protection policies?

A On Tuesday, the Chancellor promised that payments under mortgage protection policies would be "free from tax because equivalent payments from income support had always been exempt from tax". He said he would introduce legislation in the next Finance Bill to exempt benefits paid under mortgage payment protection policies from tax. The exemption will be retrospective.

Q How about policies covering other sorts of loan?

A No, there a number of exceptions, such as contract workers with less than 12 months of their contracts to run, part-timers working less than 16 hours a week, and those not in continuous employment for six months.



Giving notice: mortgage lenders said such a "bombshell" would further damage the ailing housing market

KW funds switch approved

Investors with Knight Williams, the controversial independent financial adviser, yesterday voted overwhelmingly in favour of a proposed takeover of their funds by Singer & Friedlander, the merchant bank (Caroline Merrell writes).

The deal means that the 20,000 KW investors' funds, currently worth £400 million, will be dissolved and the assets passed over to Singer & Friedlander's range of investment funds. The bank aims to match as far as possible the asset allocation and risk profile of the existing KW funds.

The switchover will boost investors' holdings by about £200 for every £20,000 invested. This is because the new funds will be on a single-priced basis, as opposed to having different buying and selling prices, like a unit trust.

In spite of nearly 98 per cent of investors voting in favour, some who attended a series of EGMs, one for each fund to be dissolved, were concerned that they were being "railroaded" into a decision.

At the meetings in London, Tony Fraher, chief executive of Singer & Friedlander, quelled fears about the performance of his company's funds and pointed out that most were in the upper quartile in performance terms. He also emphasised that former KW clients would continue to be protected by the Investors Compensation Scheme.

He said: "The ICS will continue to apply in the same way as it did with Knight Williams. The transferred assets will be ring-fenced, they are not assets of Singer & Friedlander."

Kenneth Jordan, founder of the Knight Williams action group, which has spearheaded a campaign for compensation on behalf of 250 dissatisfied clients, said that he would continue to keep an eye on the performance of the funds under Singer & Friedlander.

He added: "The action group will remain in place in a monitoring capacity."

Weekend Money is edited by Anne Ashworth

THE COST OF COVER

■ Mortgage payment protection. Premiums are worked out per £100 of cover. Of the two largest lenders, the Halifax charges £6.90 per £100 of cover, while the Abbey National charges £6.95 per £100. The Halifax's cover will pay the mortgage for 24 months if you cannot work through sickness or disability and 12 months if you are made redundant. The Abbey pays out for 12 months for redundancy and up to three years for sickness or disability.

■ Payment protection for personal loans. A monthly premium is added onto

your repayments. On a loan of £5,000 repayable over three years you would pay £20.87 a month with the Halifax and £19.03 with the Abbey. The Halifax pays for 12 months if you are made redundant and up to 60 months for sickness or disability. The Abbey pays for 12 months for redundancy and for the term of the loan for sickness or disability.

■ Credit cards. Insurance pays off a minimum credit balance or a percentage of your balance. The Halifax charges 60p per month per £100 outstanding on the card.

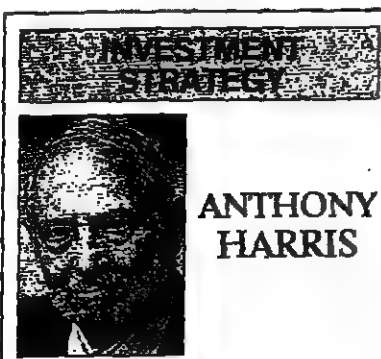
Benefit cuts, page 32

A time to forget old saws

Whenever the equity market starts the month of May with a strong showing, veteran investors feel a familiar twinge of memory: "Sell in May, and go away." The odd thing about this irrational old saw is that historically it has been right more often than not: there does seem to be some rising-sap effect among brokers as the darling buds open. In a year like this, when the market surges as the news gets worse, the old reflex seems especially timely. Sterling is weak, the economy is slowing, the outside world looks threatening and quarrelsome, and at home the only problem for news editors is what gets the lead: today's City disaster, or today's government gaffe? And still, most days, the market rises. It could hardly be more suggestive.

Wait a minute, though. Every investor needs well-developed reflexes, but not as a spur to action: when your thumbs prick the first thing to do is not to ring your broker, but to review the facts. The market may be up — it has risen about 10 per cent since its end-of-winter blues a few weeks ago; but is it high? In relation to the past? In relation to earnings? And perhaps most important, in relation to gilts? And when you have answers to these questions about the fundamentals, look inside the market: is the cash likely to flow in or out? (If there is one unchanging theme in these columns, it is that while the fundamentals are a good guide to the long term, in the short run, cash is king.)

Fortunately, all of these questions are



ANTHONY HARRIS

straightforward, and most of them give the same answer: the market may be up, but it is not high. Historically, the Footsie peaked in 1994, before the Fed started an avalanche with a pebble-sized quarter-point rise in interest rates. Since then, Wall Street has reached repeated records, but the Footsie is still about 100 points downhill from the base camp established then. It is true that the rise in US earnings has been even more spectacular than that in Britain; but remember that while the US rise looks likely to level off, British companies have yet to report the boost that will result from sterling's fall. (Another old theme: equity value moves the opposite way to exchange rates.)

High in relation to earnings? Slightly more complicated. Price-earnings ratios do look quite demanding at the moment, which means simply that the expectation of more rises is already in prices; but they

are well short of stratospheric. Dividend yields, by contrast, look tempting at nearly 4 per cent in relation both to history and to gilts. Prospectively, yields are well over half the running yield on long gilts, while historically they have been well under half before every main market correction. Two caveats: British distribution ratios are historically high — too high, according to the CBI; and the inflation risk which explains the higher gilts yield has faded. Even so, nothing here looks remotely like thin ice.

It is the market itself, though, which is the clincher. Institutional cash flow has improved as contribution holidays have ended; and now there is an important new cash flow from takeovers. The cash bids already announced this year will add about a third to normal institutional cash flows. On the demand side, the strong cash position of corporate balance sheets and the cautious approach to expansion both suggest that rights issues will be rare. A stock shortage seems much likelier than a glut.

So the up trend looks safe. How far? Unless the gilt market bucks the international recovery, equities would have to reach 3,450 just to keep in step. If the gilts recovery should persist, that level-pegging target would rise well above 3,600. And given cash, stock shortage and momentum, the peak could be a good deal higher. So there is plenty of possible upside. As for the downside, we may come to that. Remember that May is less than a week old.

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The flow of new investment trusts is drying up, Robert Miller reports



The trail-blazing First Russian Frontiers trust launched last December has used warrants to good effect

Investors supported investment trusts in unprecedented numbers during 1994, helping to make it a bumper year with 45 new launches attracting a record £3.9 billion. But figures published this week show that as the flow of new trusts dries up, with only seven coming on stream in the first quarter of this year against 19 in the same period last year, investors are being more cautious.

On Monday, the Association of Investment Trust Companies revealed that the number of savers who use the popular, low-cost, regular monthly and lump sum savings schemes has fallen by nearly 5,000 to 81,333 since the end of last year. At the same time, the amount of money they invested was down nearly £18 million to £44 million.

That is not to say that investors who backed last year's newcomers have done particularly badly. Those who backed Rothschild's Five Arrows trust, since it changed its status from off-shore fund to investment trust last July would be sitting on a 6 per cent gain. Even more

impressive is the performance of the warrants that came with the Chile trust. Between February and the beginning of May this year, their value has soared by nearly 111 per cent, while the actual shares in the trust are up 11 per cent.

Warrants are a feature of almost every new investment trust nowadays. Generally, investors receive one free warrant for every five shares they are granted. These warrants give investors the right to buy a fixed number of shares at a set date and at a predetermined price.

But you do not have to exercise that right and warrants trade separately on the stock market from the ordinary shares of a trust. So you can sell them on without ever having to exercise them. They are a sweetener to attract investors, particularly for the more specialist trusts. The trail-blazing First Russian Frontiers trust launched last December and managed by Pictet, the asset management arm of the private Swiss Bank, used them to good effect.

But warrants are part and parcel of new investment trust

launches and without the momentum of high-profile and often marketing-driven events, investors have become wary of committing too much money.

But last year's investment trust launch figures are distorted by the fact that nearly £2 billion of the total raised was down to the enormous public appetite for just three of the debutants. The blockbuster European Privatisation trusts from Mercury and Kleinwort Benson together accounted for £1 billion, but they were dwarfed by the £740 million flotation of 3i.

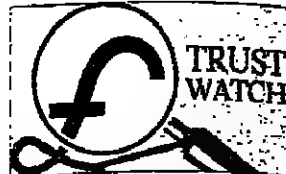
Special performance data supplied by Micropal shows that over the past year the Kleinwort European trust is down by 12 per cent. Its twin at Mercury is showing a profit of 33p for every £100 invested over the same time. As the new leader of the investment trust sector, 3i has rewarded its followers with a return of £22.28 for every £100 invested. These figures have to be set against the Micropal average for all investment trusts, which show that investors, in general, are nursing losses of about 10 per cent. But

that is no reason to sell out, says John Szymanowski, investment trust analyst at SG Warburg. If you already have a holding in an investment trust, are thinking about it, or you want to back a new launch there are three basic questions to ask yourself. The Szymanowski checklist is:

■ Do I believe the investment story?
■ Why now as opposed to say in three months' time?
■ What is the reputation and expertise of the trust's manager?

There is a fourth question for new trusts and that is: can I buy the investment theme, such as Chile or commodities or emerging markets in general, through an already existing trust?

As an example, Mr Szymanowski quotes the case of the Mercury World Mining Trust launched in December 1993 and managed by Julian Baring. At the launch, Julian Baring predicted that base metal prices would rise, says Mr Szymanowski. "Well, they have rocketed since then. But the share prices of the companies in the Mercury portfolio have hardly moved. Yet the aggregate earnings of the largest investments held by World Mining were \$829 million in 1993. That shot up to \$2.2 billion last year and the consensus forecast for this year is \$3.8 billion. Sooner or later that value has to filter through to investors."



THE Treasury this week published a set of draft regulations that could revolutionise the way in which unit trusts are sold and promoted in the future.

Anthony Nelson, Economic Secretary to the Treasury, told Weekend Money that the proposed new open-ended investment companies, known by the unprepossessing name of oecis, will stem the flow of hundreds of millions of pounds of UK investors' money to offshore centres such as Luxembourg and Dublin. As a plus, unit trust companies will find it much easier to promote their funds throughout Europe and elsewhere.

Mr Nelson also said that when oecis are up and running, possibly by the beginning of next year, they will spearhead the Government's next stage of spreading wider share ownership. He said: "We are now of the view that many investors would like to put their long-term savings in a vehicle such as the proposed new open-ended companies that in turn invest in a range of companies rather than just one or two privatisation issues."

Oecis could offer considerable advantages over both unit trusts and investment trusts. They will be made up of shares, like an investment trust, but they will be open-ended, like a unit trust.

One of the biggest advantages of the new funds over unit trusts is that they will operate on a single price, that is, investors will be able to buy and sell shares at the same price.

This system contrasts with the bid/offer spread on unit trusts, where the price at which you can sell units is usually about 6 per cent lower than the price at which you buy them. It is this pricing system and the use of trustees that have made it difficult for unit trust companies to sell their funds abroad.

Unit trust companies say oecis would be much cheaper to operate than unit trusts, which is one of the reasons why many of them are considering converting their existing unit trusts into oecis as soon as the legislation is finalised.

The Association of Unit Trusts and Investment Funds, the trade body for the unit trust industry, believes that up to 50 per cent of unit trusts may eventually convert.

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Society bosses feel the strain

Fun and laughter were never the keynote of the annual Building Societies Association conference. But when delegates gather in Birmingham in 11 days' time, the smiles may be more strained than usual, as chief executives ponder whether they will be eligible to attend next year. Or whether they will be facing a new future as head of a bank subsidiary, after a painful takeover battle that severely curtailed their golfing time.

A few days after the conference, the Abbey National will reveal the details of its planned £1.1 billion bid for the National & Provincial Building Society. The Abbey's approach has this week sent the N&P, tipped last year by *The Times* as a takeover candidate, out on a search for a friendly merger with either the Nationwide, the Alliance & Leicester or the Woolwich.

Meanwhile, other societies are realising that their independence could also be at threat to a hostile bidder, which might not even be British. A number of German, Spanish and possibly Dutch banks see a society as an ideal way to enter the UK



ANNE ASHWORTH
Personal Finance
Editor

financial services industry. Although some of these foreign banks have the billions needed to buy a top-five society, others have a more restricted budget.

This means that more moderately-sized societies, such as the Bristol & West (price tag about £550 million) and the Birmingham Midshires (£350 million) could be in someone's sights. Although the prospect of foreigners poised to pounce may be causing consternation among building society bosses, they also know that their customers would view an approach from home or overseas as an opportunity for some easy money.

The knowledge that savers and borrowers would put their interests first, with barely a second thought for the

career paths of the society's senior managers may lay behind recent attempts to play down the importance of members. They have been reminded they do not have the same rights as shareholders and that they do not own the society's reserves.

But members should not be demoralised. No one would dare to try to take over a society without offering money to the members, as members have one significant advantage: the right to vote for or against any deal.

No-risk gamble

SUCH is the eagerness of National & Provincial customers to know how much the Abbey National will pay for their society that they are calling at Abbey branches to

find out more. Unfortunately, Abbey staff cannot speculate on the sum, as the two organisations have, within the past few days, signed a confidentiality agreement.

Those who are not N&P members and have no excuse to hang around in the air-conditioned Abbey branches can console themselves with the findings of a survey by *Investors Chronicle*.

This reveals that prize money of as much as £15 billion could be in store for building society savers, if their societies decide to welcome the embrace of a bidder.

The not entirely serious survey calculates that an N&P saver could receive as much as £860, £200 more than previous estimates. Other lucky savers include Leeds & Holbeck devotees who could, it is calculated, collect £747 on a takeover, while those of Northern Rock, the successful Newcastle-based society, could pocket £902.

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Elderly cast from care

Liz Dolan visits
the twilight
world of
the old and
underfunded

Elderly and infirm people are being evicted from residential care homes because social security payments are failing to keep up with rises in fees. Age Concern England said this week.

Representatives of the charity are to meet Roger Evans, an Under Secretary at the Social Security Department, on Tuesday to discuss what they fear is a fast-growing crisis in the financing of elderly people in care. They say the situation is the direct result of changes in government funding arrangements introduced two years ago.

Depending on the outcome of the initial discussions with the Government, Age Concern is considering plans for a high-profile campaign to bring the problem to the attention of a wider audience.

Sally Greengross, director-general, said: "We are now at the point where vulnerable older people are being evicted from their homes. Do we need any more proof that the current system isn't working?"

On April 1, 1993, local authorities took over financial responsibility for all elderly people in care. Those who already lived in a residential or nursing home, remained the responsibility of the DSS.



Should Tom and Diana, in *Waiting for God*, be concerned about care of the elderly?

even if they were not, at that time, claiming income support. These people are said to have "preserved rights" to DSS funding.

"People on preserved rights are a legacy of the community care reforms," Lady Green-gross said. "They should not have to take part in a lottery with no jackpot."

Since the changes were implemented, care home costs have risen faster than DSS payments. "The Government must recognise that preserved rights to income support for some residents in residential and nursing homes doesn't cover the cost of care, and causes residents and their families to fear for the future. There is a range of options available to the Government that it must now consider," if

DSS payments do not meet the existing charges, and relatives and friends are unable, or unwilling to meet the shortfall, the local authority assumes financial responsibility for their care. This can mean that people who have been happily settled in a home for a long time are forced to leave, even if they subsequently end up in a home charging the same level of fees, or even higher, Age Concern says. The local authority cannot take over responsibility for people who previously had preserved DSS rights until they have actually been evicted from their existing accommodation.

The real stinker is that there's no way the local authority can top up DSS payments so they remain in their existing home. Apart from anything else, this means that the local authority will then have to meet the total bill, once the resident has been moved to a new home, rather than having to find a relatively small sum to allow them to stay where they are, Age Concern says.

Margaret Bailey, owner of a residential home in Essex, says three of her residents have already had to leave because they were unable to pay the fees. At least one has ended up in a home charging higher fees.

Mrs Bailey's home froze its fees this year. An increase last year was purely to cover rising costs, she says. Fifteen of the current 25 residents have been with her since before the DSS cut-off date in 1993. Most are currently self-funding, but many are coming to the end of their resources. Some relatives fight hard to get alternative funding from charities, she says. "Others can't be bothered." Only two or three provide funding from their own pockets.

Offspring do not have any legal obligations to meet any shortfall, though this does not remove the desire to do so — a situation that can lead to a whole new set of problems.

Mrs Bailey cites the example of one couple in their 70s who are currently paying the fees of a parent, who is 93. "They may have to stop paying soon because they're getting to the stage where they're going to need the money for themselves."

The DSS said: "The situation is actually quite simple. Care homes can charge what they like. We will pay care home fees up to certain limits. If the fees are above these limits, people have various options. If they wish to stay in the home, they, or their relatives can make up the difference between our contribution and the rest of the cost."

The DSS said that the fees of "some" homes still fall within prescribed DSS limits, but could give no indication of what proportion of all care homes these represented.

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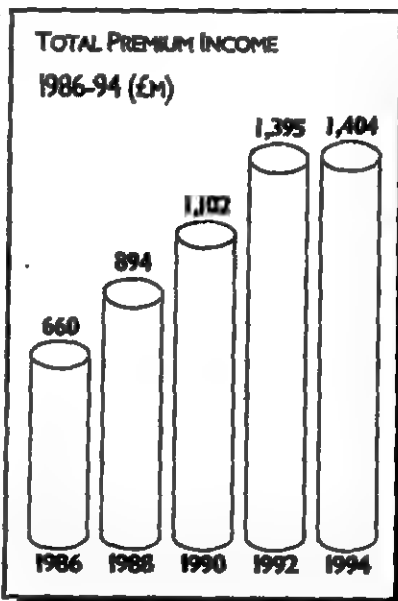
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Take cover to trim those legal bills

Helen Pridham considers insurance as an alternative to legal aid



Barristers' costs can add thousands of pounds to legal action bills

With the Government determined to reduce the legal aid bill to the bare minimum, more and more people are being caught in an "injustice" trap. They cannot get their full rights under the law because they are too well off to qualify for legal aid, but cannot afford the cost of long, drawn-out, legal action.

Solicitors report that clients with good cases are often forced to give up legal action or accept lower, out-of-court, settlements because they cannot meet mounting legal bills. Bringing a relatively straightforward legal case can easily cost between £3,000 to £4,000, while personal injury cases involving expert witnesses can add up to tens of thousands of pounds. And there is no guarantee of success.

There is an easy and cheap way round this problem. You can add legal expenses insurance to your motor and household insurance policies for as little as £10 to £15 a year.

However, these legal protection add-ons do not all give the same cover and policyholders need to look carefully at what they are getting.

Legal expenses add-ons to motor policies have become more popular in recent years and some insurers report that as many as nine out of ten policyholders now opt for this extra. With some motor policies, legal expenses insurance is included automatically.

Motor add-ons are principally designed to cover the cost of pursuing legal action to recover uninsured losses if you are involved in a motor accident that is not your fault. These losses can include your policy "excess", the hire of replacement vehicles, compensation for damage to clothes and belongings and compensation for injuries suffered in an accident, or compensation for your family if you are killed.

Under household policies, where the take-up of legal expenses add-ons is much lower, the scope of the insur-

ance is more varied, depending on the cover.

Some provide only two basic areas of cover - for consumer disputes over the purchase or sale of goods and services and compensation claims in the event of injury or death in an accident that was not your fault, including medical negligence claims. This is the basic cover provided by Lawclub for Cornhill's household policies and the Legal Protection Group, which acts for Sun Alliance.

However, add-on policies provided for a number of large household insurers by DAS and Hambro Legal Protection, the two leading legal expenses insurers, are normally more extensive. Besides consumer disputes and personal injuries cover, they will often cover you for the pursuit of civil claims relating to your main residence, such as disputes with neighbours, and contract of employment disputes, such as claims of unfair dismissal.

Edward Wright, chief executive of Hambro Legal Protection, says: "The most frequent areas for legal expenses claims under household legal protec-

tion policies are for consumer disputes. Holiday problems are very common, disputes with neighbours, for example, over boundaries, and employment problems."

DAS and Hambro Legal Protection will tailor their policies to meet different insurers' requirements, so you may not get their full range of cover if your insurer has not deemed it necessary. DAS, for example, offers policies with Direct Line, the Prudential and General Accident. Hambro provides legal add-ons for Norwich Union, Commercial Union and others.

Both DAS and Hambro also sell add-on policies through independent insurance brokers. But DAS only provides the basic personal injuries and consumer dispute cover under policies sold through this route. Hambro is the most extensive. Besides areas already mentioned, it also covers the defence of motoring prosecutions and legal fees incurred if you are singled out for an "in-depth" investigation by the Inland Revenue, which it says may

get more frequent when "self-assessment" is introduced.

Claims will be accepted by legal expenses insurers only if they decide you have a reasonable prospect of winning your case. However, Paul Aspin, assistant general manager of DAS, says: "We do not make this decision ourselves, we accept the professional judgment of the solicitors involved. Provided there is a 50-50 chance of winning, we will back the case." Pre-existing problems, and claims that arise within, say three to six months of taking out the insurance, though, are usually excluded.

The limits on cover, which normally extends to the policyholder's family, are typically £25,000 or £50,000 per claim. This covers solicitors' and barristers' fees, expert witnesses, court costs and opponents' costs, if these are awarded against you.

Legal expenses insurance can put you in a better position right from the start. As one solicitor says: "It gives you more muscle. If the other side knows that cost is not a problem, they may think twice about even fighting the case."

WHO QUALIFIES FOR CIVIL LEGAL AID?

TO BE considered for civil legal aid you must show that you have reasonable grounds for taking court action. If you can, and your disposable income is below £2,425, you will qualify for help. If it is between £2,425 and £7,187 (£7,920 for personal injury) you will have to make a contribution. If your disposable income is over those figures you will not qualify. In addition, if you have disposable savings of between £3,000 and £6,750 (£8,560 for personal injury

cases) you will have to make a contribution. If the savings are more, you will not qualify. Even if you qualify, if you win your case, the Legal Aid Board will seek to recover its costs from you. Until now, in assessing a person's disposable income and savings, all mortgage repayments could be deducted from income and the value of your home was not counted. However, in an announcement last week, the Lord Chancellor, taking steps to tighten up on

legal aid for the "apparently wealthy", said he intended to amend the regulations. In future, any equity in a house of more than £100,000 will be taken into account as an asset, and the amount of mortgage repayments deductible from income will be limited to those borrowing £100,000, or less. Assets of relatives who "appear to be providing a significant material advantage to the applicant" may also be taken into account.

Benefit cuts will hit borrowers

The Government's embarrassing U-turn this week over the introduction of tax on mortgage payment protection insurance highlights the importance of this type of insurance in an environment where the Government is slashing state benefits.

It is planning deep cuts in its £1.1 billion bill for state support for ill or out of work borrowers from October, and is trying to promote the benefits of private insurance to cover mortgages instead.

Lenders, insurers and housing advisers have repeatedly attacked the Government's plans on the ground that many of the most vulnerable borrowers will be excluded from taking out private insurance and so are more likely to get into arrears, or be repossessed.

Many have submitted highly critical comments to the social security advisory committee, which is advising Peter Lilley, Secretary of State for Social Security, on the reforms. Legislation to restrict income support is expected to be on the statute books before the summer recess.

Borrowers completing on loans after the beginning of October (including people who remortgage, as well as first-time buyers) will get no help from the State for nine months if they lose their jobs. They will also get no help with housing costs, such as ground rent and service charges.

Borrowers who have existing loans (completed before October) will not get any help for the first eight weeks - and then only 50 per cent of the interest for the next 18 weeks. The Government is also proposing to calculate income support payments at a standard rate of interest, which could be below

Mortgage insurance warning

Tax shock for sick or jobless homeowners

what many borrowers are paying. The Government says people should arrange their own insurance. Instead of asking the State to pick up the bill.

Mr Lilley believes that insurance companies will be forced to extend the categories of people they cover and the benefits they pay once more people start taking out private cover.

The companies agree that this may happen. But at present, the following groups of people will not be covered, or find it difficult to get themselves covered, according to Pinnacle Insurance, which underwrites insurance for some of the leading lenders.

- The unemployed or those working fewer than 16 hours a week;
- People under 18 or over 64 (or whatever age range the policy specifies);
- The self-employed;
- Seasonal, casual and contract workers;
- Anyone not in continuous employment for six to 12 months;
- Those with pre-existing medical conditions.

Taxing payment protection policies could have meant even those who qualify for cover getting into arrears with their loans. An insurance payment net of tax may not have been enough to cover the balance owing.

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Liz Dolan checks out investing in female-friendly companies that offer equal opportunities

A question of ethics



After years of discrimination in the workplace, the careers of women employees are now being given a positive boost by some companies

Well done Patricia Vaz, the British Telecom director who was named Vevee Cligou's Businesswoman of the Year this week. Twenty years ago, she was a struggling BT clerical officer with a son aged eight. Now she is one of the bosses.

So was it simply a case of taking a running jump at the notorious glass ceiling and landing effortlessly on the other side? You have to suspect otherwise.

But, interestingly, British Telecom scored particularly well in a recent survey, commissioned by Albert E Sharp, the stockbroker, on companies' attitudes to their female staff, especially those with children. Boots, Amersham International and the Bank of Scotland also figured on the "best buy" list, which was compiled primarily for Sharp's ethical clients.

The broker reports a growing interest among its ethical clients, seven in ten of whom are women, in this whole area. "For many investors, particularly women, the attitude of companies to their employees may be just as important as their attitude to the environment." Of primary concern are "the problems many families face in coping with their work and care responsibilities".

The results of the survey, which were published last month, provided a much-needed list of companies that not only met basic environ-

mental criteria, but also gave a positive boost to the careers of female employees and made it easier for both sexes to combine responsibilities at work with looking after a family.

According to Elizabeth Haigh, head of the firm's research, has demonstrated that there are a number of high-profile companies, such as Boots and Amersham International, with excellent practices. Other companies have some room for improvement but, as many companies say to us that improved practices are in the pipeline, we intend to monitor the position on an

ongoing basis. Much of the information contained in the report is not made available to the public. Ms Haigh says: "We were given the information on a confidential basis, so we can't publish it."

This means that, while ethical clients of Albert E Sharp will be able to take advantage of the information gleaned during the survey, non-clients wishing to invest in companies with strong family-oriented policies will have to depend on the judgment and knowledge of their fund managers.

Sharp has received requests for copies of the report from several other members of the

ethical investment community, including NPI and Jupiter Tyndall. It has also been contacted by academics.

Tessa Tennant, of NPI, says: "We're delighted they've gone ahead with this research. We've always felt we were contributing to the evaluation of environmental concerns, but there are a number of other areas of equal importance that need to be looked at too."

Simon Baker, head of Jupiter Tyndall's ethical investment operations, says: "I wouldn't say this was our highest priority. Ecology is our primary consideration. But it is a terribly important area

and, purely from a business point of view, those keenest in investing in green areas are women."

Of 120 companies contacted by Albert E Sharp, 50 agreed to take part in the survey. Twenty-seven fell into the "good practices" category. "We found that very encouraging," Ms Haigh says. "Before this, we didn't really know whether 'family friendly' really existed. But now we know it does."

Companies with a large female workforce tended to score better than those without. Banks, while doing well on "family friendly" attitudes, often ruled themselves out on other ethical criteria, notably their treatment of lesser developed countries. The Bank of Scotland was an honourable exception on all counts.

Criteria governing "good practices" included equal opportunities policy statements, training and promotion, membership of outside ginger groups, basic attitude to the workforce, women in management, working hours, childcare and elderly care services and employment benefits.

The American experience

Calvert, the US investment management group, set up its ethical investment arm in 1982. From the beginning, equal employment opportunities (EEO) played an important part in the investment decision-making, according to John Lickerman, the company's director of social research.

"We carry out fairly extensive research in this area," he says. "We talk directly to companies and we send out surveys. We make sure that they comply with minimum standards at least."

Since setting up the ethical side of its business, Calvert says it has been active in a

number of shareholder campaigns to improve attitudes to EEO. Most of these have involved getting firms to publish breakdowns showing what proportion of the total workforce consists of minority groups and women, and in what capacity they are employed. Under US law, all employers must give this information to the Government, but do not have to make it available to anyone else. If they supply enough pressure, however, shareholders or other interested parties can get them to publish the information. This is a practice known as EEO public disclosure.

When RR Donnelly, a Chi-

cago-based printing concern, refused to release details of a case in which it had been accused of regularly denying promotion and salary increases to black employees, a small group of shareholders, led by United States Trust Company of Boston (USTB) and supported by Calvert, launched an intensive campaign to encourage fellow shareholders to pressure the company into doing so. This resulted in a large vote in favour of public disclosure.

Since then, Donnelly has published regular bulletins for staff and shareholders with news of its EEO activities.

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Caroline Merrell and Morag Preston ask the experts how to invest a spare £50 or £200 a month to best advantage

Save a little extra for an easier life

For anyone with £50 a month to invest there are a number of sensible options, unless you want to handle the sum with a bit more sizzle.

All the advisers we canvassed recommended that you should properly insure your life and protect yourself against ill-health and accidents with permanent health insurance, before you start a regular savings plan.

You should also pay off debts, such as credit card borrowings. There was some support for using the money to repay your mortgage early. However, under the terms of fixed-rate and some other special-offer mortgages, early repayments are not allowed during the discounted period.

If you repay an extra £50 a month on a 25-year term £70,000 mortgage at the current Halifax variable mortgage rate of 8.35 per cent, and assuming the rate does not change, the debt would be cleared in just under 20 years. "Paying off your mortgage early is one of the best saving plans you can have," says Chris Kirkpatrick, of Dunfords, a firm of solicitors and financial advisers based in Gloucester. "Remember that you pay your mortgage out of taxed income. This means that if your mortgage rate is 9 per cent, the return on repaying your mortgage before the end of the term is equivalent to a return on 15 per cent for a 40 per cent taxpayer, and to 12 per cent to a 25 per cent taxpayer."

It was also generally recom-

mended that before you embark on regular savings that you should build up an emergency fund of up to £5,000 in the building society.

Your next thought should be for your old age, using the maximum tax relief available on pension contributions. These are available both to members of company schemes and to those with personal pensions. Employees can use their full 15 per cent relief by making additional voluntary contributions (AVCs).

If you are not part of an employer's AVC scheme, Dunfords suggests a free-standing AVC, with General Accident or Standard Life. The firm suggests that your contributions be split in the following ratio: 40 per cent in the with-profits fund, 30 per cent in the managed fund, and 30 per cent in the Far East funds.

Once you have covered your life, repaid your debts and prepared for your retirement, then you should start picking out a PEP, the regular savings recommendation of the majority of our advisers. But you must be prepared to make a five-year commitment. There is no capital gains tax to pay on any increase in the plan's value and no tax on the dividends.

The secret is to select a plan where the charges do not outweigh the tax benefits. The charges are the amounts that you pay to the fund managers in entry fees and annual management fees.

Although groups are increasingly moving to elimi-

nate the initial charge, this can still be as high as 5 per cent of your investment. Our advisers' choices are listed below.

Simon Philip, of Binder Hamlyn, based in Croydon, Surrey, selected the New Saints PEP. He says: "I like it because it gives investors access to the excellently managed, broadly based, Scottish American investment trust."

Daryn Williams, of Chantrey Financial Services, a central London firm, favours high-yielding unit trusts, such as the Perpetual High Income Fund or the Newton Income Fund. "Their risk profile is somewhat lower than that of growth funds, and would be ideal for the more conservative investor."

For the more cautious investor, John Eaton, of Lupton Fawcett, a Leeds firm, recommends the Alliance Trust PEP. He cited the PEP's low charges and its wide investment brief.

Sue Durrant, of Nicholas Williams Durrant & Co, another Leeds firm, suggested the Schroder UK Equity PEP. He said: "It offers a medium-risk investment in British companies and aims to provide a balance between growth of income and capital."

For the more dare-devil type of investor, she recommends the Schroder UK Enterprise Fund: "It is more aggressively managed and invests in a broad spread of UK companies with capital growth being the main objective. Like UK Equity, it has a good long-term performance."



Liquid assets: Those who do not care for stocks and shares may prefer a more liquid investment. Ron Gee, managing director of RE Gee & Co. in Shrewsbury, suggests a monthly payment scheme with a local wine merchant. He says: "Enjoy the expectation of superb future drinking. Use it to buy fine wines." Tanners Wines, also in Shrewsbury, has 12,000 customers who pay in a set amount each month. They can then spend up to four times that amount on the cellar's fine selection of wines. John Melhuish, of Tanners, says: "Our customers want to spread the cost of buying nice wines. Although there are wines we sell on which a profit can be made, we prefer our customers just to enjoy them."

Aim for a pension first

Anyone with £200 a month spare income to invest or save has a wide range of options. But our advisers were united in one view: put the money into a pension before exploring any other opportunities.

Brian Connell, manager at Grant Thornton, the financial adviser, says: "Pensions are very tax-efficient. You get tax relief at your top rate of tax on your contributions and the money in the fund rolls up tax-free. No other type of investment offers these advantages."

Employees are entitled to put up to 15 per cent of their salary tax-free into their company scheme. To use the full amount of this relief, make additional voluntary contributions (AVCs).

For personal pensions, the amount of relief available rises with age, starting at 17.5 per cent of earnings for those under 35, rising to 40 per cent for those aged 61 or over.

If you have used up your pension relief and are willing to take at least a five-year view, look at a personal equity plan (PEP), the option preferred by many of our advisers to any of the National Savings schemes, or a Tessa.

PEPs are more advantageous to higher-rate taxpayers, as this group makes the maximum tax saving from this type of investment.

Most preferred unit trust PEPs to investment trust PEPs, some citing as their reason the "dramatic narrowing of discounts on investment trusts".

This means that the prices of shares in investment trusts are no longer lower than the value of their net assets. When a trust stands at a discount, it is a bargain buy. When discount shrinks, it becomes more expensive.

Most investment and unit trust-based PEP schemes will allow you to invest through a monthly savings plan. This method has certain advantages over investing a lump sum as it trims out some of the volatility in the stock market. When the index is falling,

Sedgwick Financial Services, recommends Schroders UK equity fund and the Morgan Grenfell European fund. His other suggestions were the M&G Managed fund and the Perpetual Income fund. He selected these funds because of their good performance.

Morgan Grenfell's fund has a low front-end charge and would give the PEP investor exposure to markets other than the UK.

Michael Williams, of Nicholas Williams, was one of the few advisers who preferred investment trusts to unit trusts. He put forward the broadly-based Law & Debenture investment trust because it is undervalued.

He also chose Credit Suisse's Income unit trust for its record of continuous income growth.

The various National Savings schemes, such as certificates and the various bonds, were not favoured by most of our advisers, because the rates offered are not particularly high, especially for those who want to save monthly.

But the Eighth Index-linked issue of certificates, which pays a compound rate of 3 per cent over five years, had several enthusiasts.

Apart from interest, index-linked certificates also offer inflation-proofing. This means that if inflation over a five-year period averages 3 per cent, the return will be 6 per cent tax-free, equivalent to 8 per cent for a basic rate taxpayer and 10 per cent for a 40 per cent taxpayer.

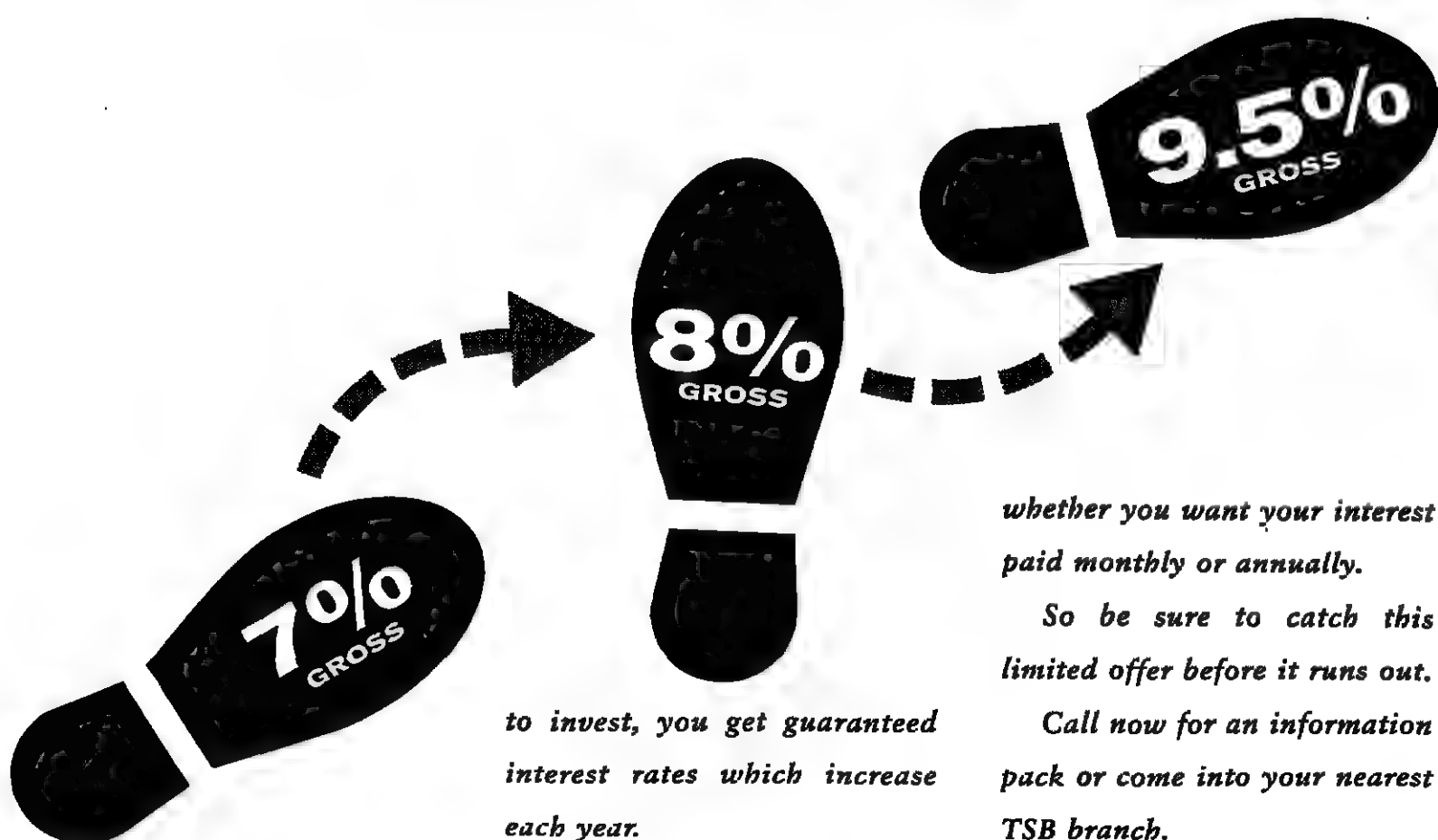
6 You get tax relief at your top rate and the money in the fund rolls up tax-free

your regular contributions buys more shares in the investment trust and more units in the unit trust, an effect known as "pound cost averaging".

Paul Boni, investment director at Berry Birch & Noble, says: "I would suggest two broadly-based funds which are well managed, with good performance and low charges. They are the Foreign & Colonial Investment trust and the M&G Managed Growth PEP."

Andrew Oliver, technical investment director at

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- No withdrawal fee after 5 years
- No UK tax

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Lump sum investments from £1,000 – £6,000.

For details return the coupon or telephone (01245) 390 000 (24 hour service).

To: The M&G Group, Bristol BS38 7ET. Please send me details of your PEP offer and how to transfer any non M&G PEP.

NO SALESMAN WILL CALL.

You should contact your independent financial adviser (if you have one) before investing. The price of units and the income from them can go down as well as up. The value to you of the tax benefits will depend on your own circumstances. The tax regime of PEPs could change in the future.

NAME	INITIALS	SURNAME
ADDRESS		
POSTCODE		
NGACOS		

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M&G

Is your investment objective tax-free income with capital growth?

Income PEP has proven track record

Trust has beaten last three five year

haven't convinced discount off the of May

0345 77 55
WE'RE STRAIGHT

هكذا من الأصل

MONEY tips for holidaymakers

WHETHER you want to buy a smorgasbord or a daiquiri, the practicalities of foreign currency ought not to take the fun out of your holiday. *Summer Holiday Money Guide*, published by Visa, includes financial information on Britain's top ten destinations. The number of cash machines accepting Visa cards, bank and best shopping prices are included in the free 45-page pocket guide. Emergency telephone numbers are also listed. Practical advice is also given on how to use and look after cards and travellers' cheques. Call 0171-231 5432, or write to PO Box 4648, London, SE1 3YE.

■ **Vacation Work's series, *Live & Work***, could be of comfort to the more zealous adventurer. The series looks at finding a job, starting a business, or settling overseas. Moving outside the European Union, the series now covers the US and Canada, Australia and New Zealand, as well as Scandinavia. Divided into neat sections, the books cover entry regulations, setting up home, daily life and employment. Using industry reports and personal case histories, the series provides a useful introduction to the business structure of a new

area. Published on May 15 at £8.95 a copy, the series will be available at bookshops. You may also order by calling 01865 790885, paying an additional £1.50 per title for postage and packing.

■ **Perfectly Legal Tax Loopholes**, published by Pitman Books, summarises tax rules and advises on how to make savings. Written by Stephen Courtney, an accountant, the book covers family and business tax, capital gains tax and inheritance tax. The 195-page book costs £15.99. It is available at most bookshops, or telephone 0171-631 0710.

■ **National Pet Week**, running from April 29 until May 8, brings good news for cat and dog owners. Jardine Pet Insurance has launched Moggies & Mongrels, a pet insurance scheme designed especially for pets without pedigrees. There is no age limit for taking out a new policy, but a certificate of health is needed for dogs that are more than eight years old and cats over ten. It also offers a choice of monthly or annual premiums. Telephone 0121-626 7890.

MORAG PRESTON



THE TIMES MONEY INFORMATION SERVICE

SAVERS' BEST BUYS

Account	Deposit	Rate	Interest paid
Yorkshire BS 0800 378838	1st Class Acc	Postal	£1,000 6.20 Y/y
Skipton BS 01756 700511	3 High Street	Instant	£2,000 6.25 Y/y
B&W Asset 0800 503330	Instant Acc	Instant	£10,000 6.45 Y/y
Northorn Bank BS 0500 505000	Gro Direct	Instant	£20,000 6.70 Y/y

Account	Deposit	Rate	Interest paid
Yorkshire BS 0800 378838	Fixed Rate Bond	31.5.99	£5,000 8.50 F/y/y
Woodwich BS 0800 470000	2 Year Fixed	25.00	£500 8.00 F/y/y
Sun Banking Corp 01438 744500	Investment Certs	31.3.98	£1,000 8.50 F/y/y
Chelsea BS 0800 272505	3 Year Fixed	25.00	£5,000 8.50 F/y/y

Account	Deposit	Rate	Interest paid
Sun Banking Corp 01438 744500	5 year	£8,300	8.50 F/y/y
Hinckley & Rugby BS 0800 774499	5 year	£30,000	7.65 Y/y
Market Harborough BS 01858 463244	5 year	£9,000	7.75 Y/y
Holmesdale BS 01737 245716	5 year	£500	7.50 Y/y

CREDIT CARDS BEST BUYS

PERSONAL LOANS BEST BUYS				
	APR	Monthly payment on £3,000 for 3 years		
		with insurance	no insurance	
Clydesdale Bank 0141 223 2216	16.20%	£113.94	£103.39	
Midland Bank 0345 180180	15.40%	£116.54	£103.14	
N&P BS 0800 808080	15.50%	£118.22	£103.29	
Abbey National 01908 690140	16.9%	£117.41	£105.05	

PERSONAL LOANS BEST BUYS

Sources: MoneyFacts, the Monthly Guide to Investment & Mortgage Rates (01692 500 625)

			
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No. A - Feeder account required. In the interest paid column, C = no interest free period D = annual fee retained £1.5K charged per annum E = Annual fee waived for 1st year for new accounts F = fixed rate (all other rates are variable). 5K+ denotes interest paid on maturity.

* RATES SHOWN ARE GROSS AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE

PLEASE CHECK RATES BEFORE INVESTING

Source: Moneyfacts, the Money Guide to Investment & Mortgage Rates (01662 500 665)

PIBS

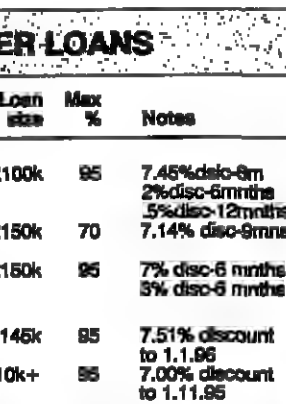
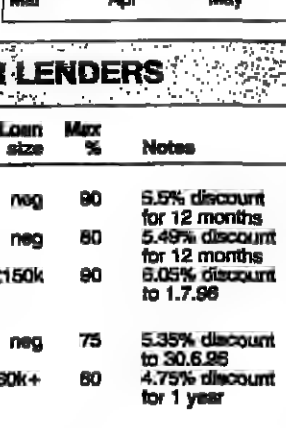
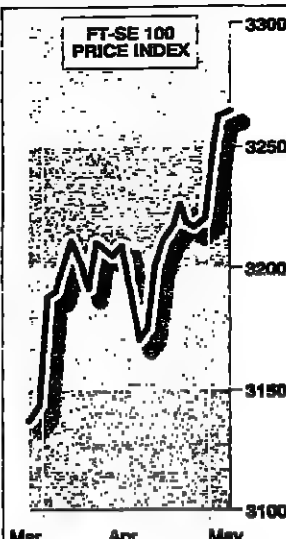
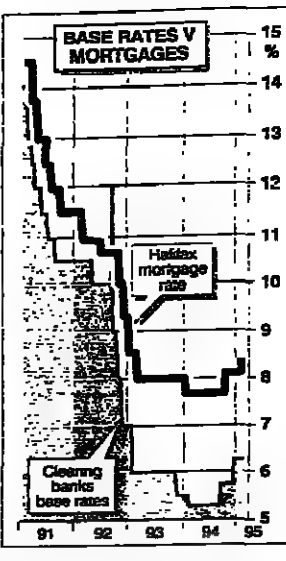
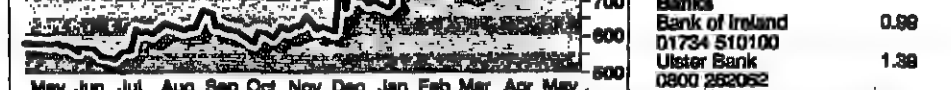
Leeds Permanent	13.625%	136.50	9.967	100.00	50,000	
Leeds & Holbeck	13.375%	127.50	10.482	100.23	1,000	
Newcastle	10.750%	102.875	10.447	100.32	1,000	
Newcastle	12.625%	122.75	10.270	100.45	1,000	
Northern Rock	12.625%	122.00	10.342	100.14	1,000	
Skipton	12.875%	122.00	10.547	100.48	1,000	

FLOATING RATE

Fixed Rate	Gross coupon	Buying price	Issue price	Minimum purchase amount
First National	9.8750%	108.00	100.00	1,000
Cheltenham & Gloucester	9.80166%	100.50	100.00	1,000

PIBS = Permanent Interest-bearing Securities. Source: ABI AMRO Home Loans - 0711-801 0101

MERCURY ASSET MANAGEMENT ON THE RISE



NATIONAL SAVINGS

Gross rate	At tax rates 25%	At tax rates 40%	Min/maximum investment	Notice	Contact
Ordinary A/c	2.00	1.50	1.20	10-10,000	01418494555
Investment A/c	5.25	3.94	3.15	20-500	01418494555
Income Bond	6.50	4.88	3.90	2,000-24,999	01418494555
First Opt Bond	6.40	4.80	3.84	1,000-25,000	01418494555
42nd Issue Certificate	5.85	4.35	3.51	25-1,000	01418494555
Gen Ex Rate	7.75	5.81	4.65	100-250,000	01418494555
Capital Bonds	7.75	5.81	4.65	100-250,000	01418494555
8th Index Linked	3.00	5.63	4.50	100-10,000	01418494555
Pensioners Bond	7.50	5.63	4.50	500-20,000	01418494555

* Net 5.70 (2.10 p) of net tax rate. First 10% of net tax rate is 10% of net tax rate. Additional 10% of net tax rate is 10% of net tax rate. Additional 10% of net tax rate is 10% of net tax rate.

* Rates shown are gross and subject to change without notice

PLEASE CHECK RATES BEFORE INVESTING

Source: Moneyfacts, the Money Guide to Investment & Mortgage Rates (01662 500 665)

PENSION ANNUITIES

All figures are the gross annual annuity (£100,000 purchase), guaranteed 5 years, paid monthly in advance

SINGLE LIFE (level ann)

Male: Age 60 Age 65 Age 70

Female: Age 60 Age 65 Age 70

Equity Life Level £10,589 £11,645 £12,894

Can Life Level £10,411 £11,570 £12,814

Sn Life Level £10,547 £11,581 £12,842

MGM Asmce Level £10,559 £11,576 £12,811

General Level £10,682 £11,706 £12,932

SINGLE LIFE Female: Age 60 Age 65 Age 70

Male: Age 60 Age 65 Age 70

Equity Life Level £9,822 £10,841 £11,714

Can Life Level £9,682 £10,681 £11,571

Sn Life Level £9,682 £10,681 £11,571

MGM Asmce Level £9,822 £10,841 £11,714

General Level £9,822 £10,841 £11,714

JOINT LIFE, 2/3 WIDOWS (level annuity)

Male: Age 60 Age 65 Age 70

Female: Age 60 Age 65 Age 70

Equity Life Level £9,682 £10,681 £11,571

Can Life Level £9,682 £10,681 £11,571

Sn Life Level £9,682 £10,681 £11,571

MGM Asmce Level £9,822 £10,841 £11,714

General Level £9,822 £10,841 £11,714

Source: Annual Direct (0171 375 1178)

Compiled by: Morag Preston

FIRST-TIME BUYERS

Lender Interest rate % Loan size Max % Notes

Building Societies

Hinckley & Rugby 1.25 to 150k 70 7.14% discount

0455 251 234 5.00% discount for 9 months

Brad & Bingley 3.15 £30k+ 75 5.00% discount for 12 months

0800 252 983 6% disc 5 months

Skipton 2.29 to £150k 95 1.75% disc 1 year

0800 590545

Banks

Abbey National 3.15 neg 75 5.18% discount

0131 556 8555 to 11.6.95

Lloyds 3.60 £80k+ 95 4.75% discount for 1 year

Local Branch

Larger lenders, larger loans and first-time buyers tables supplied by the Lenders Ltd.

Further information: Day's Guide, 01753 880482.

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Subdued end to the week

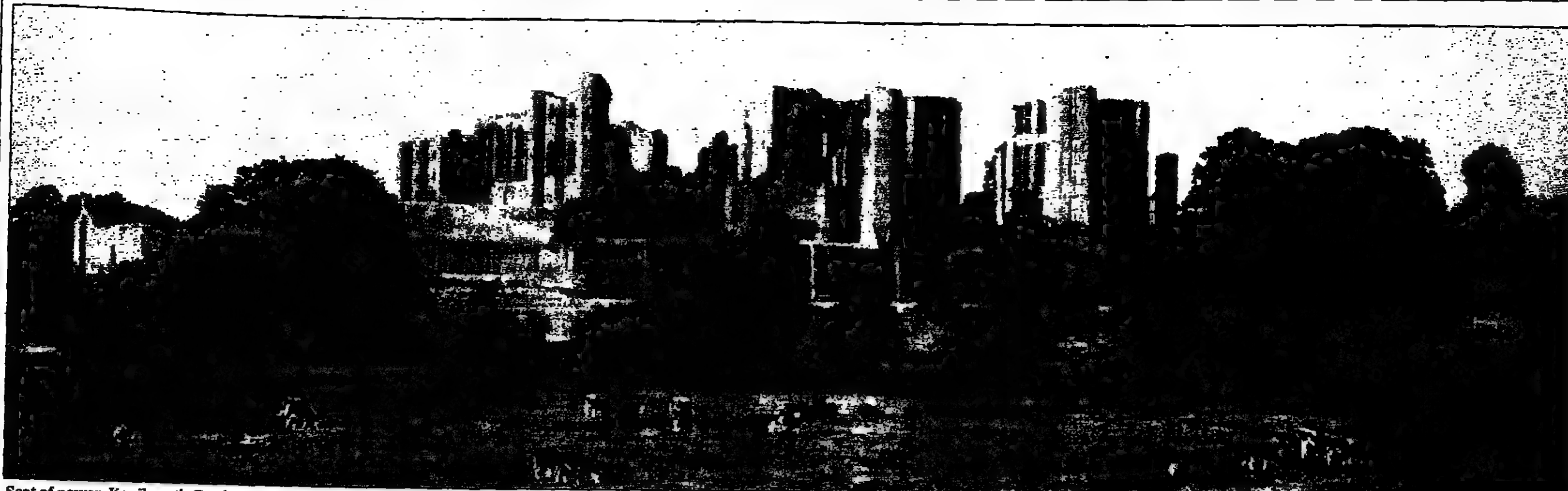
TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place ten business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

BANKS						
High	Low	Company	Price	Chg	%	P/E
462	413	Albany Banc	465	-	-	7
312	291	Albany Banc	291	-	-	7
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38 UNIT TRUST PRICES

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Part one of a guide to English Heritage sites that will give free admission to thousands of Times readers next month



Seat of power: Kenilworth Castle, headquarters in the 1260s of Simon de Montfort's parliamentary movement. The castle's golden age came in the 16th century, when it was owned by Robert Dudley, Elizabeth I's favourite adviser

Passport to the treasures of Britain

This summer *The Times*, in association with pensions specialist NPI, has joined English Heritage and the Historic Houses Association to offer readers unprecedented access to Britain's national heritage. From June to September, readers will be able to visit 100 historic sites in England, Scotland and Wales at reduced prices — just collect six tokens and apply for your Times/NPI Passport to the Treasures of Britain to qualify for the discounts.

As a bonus to launch the campaign, passport-holders and their children are entitled to free admission at more than 130 English Heritage properties during the weekend of June 3/4. Listed below are some of the sites that will waive entrance fees for Times/NPI passport-holders that weekend. Further details will be published in *The Times* on Monday.

Aldborough Roman Town
Nr Boroughbridge, North Yorks
Principal town of the Brigantes, largest tribe in Roman Britain; includes defences and mosaic pavements.

Appuldurcombe House
Nr Wroxall, Isle of Wight
Shell of an 18th-century baroque-style house, set in grounds designed by Capability Brown.

Ashby de la Zouche Castle
Ashby de la Zouche, Leics
Ruins of a late medieval castle dominated by an 80ft tower.

Audley End House
Nr Saffron Walden, Essex
Built by Thomas Howard, Earl of Suffolk; set in parkland landscaped by Capability Brown.

Avebury Museum
Avebury, Wiltshire
Details research on Avebury stone circles.

Aydon Castle
Nr Corbridge, Northumberland
One of the finest fortified manor houses in England, dating from the late 13th century.

Barnard Castle
Barnard Castle, Co Durham
Substantial remains of a large castle built on a rugged River Tees escarpment.

Battle Abbey
Battle, East Sussex
Site of the battle of Hastings; the abbey's cloister and 14th-century gatehouse are well preserved.

Bayham Abbey
Nr Lamberhurst, East Sussex
Ruins of an abbey founded in 1208, in an 18th-century landscaped setting.

Beeston Castle
Nr Chester, Cheshire
Commands exceptional views of surrounding countryside.

Belsay Hall
Belsay, Northumberland
One of the most important neoclassical houses in Britain, plus a well-preserved 14th-century castle and ruined 17th-century mansion.

Berney Arms Windmill
Nr Reedham, Norfolk
Landmark for miles around.

Berry Pomeroy Castle
Nr Totnes, Devon
Romantic late medieval castle with a flamboyant courtyard mansion.

Berwick-upon-Tweed Barracks
Berwick, Northumberland
Among the earliest purpose-built barracks; little changed since 1717.

Birdoswald Fort
Nr Greenhead, Northumberland
Well-preserved fort on Hadrian's Wall.

Bishop's Palace
Lincoln, Lincolnshire
Medieval palace of the bishops of

Lincoln, with one of Europe's most northerly vineyards.

Bishop's Waltham Palace
Bishop's Waltham, Hampshire
Medieval seat of the bishops of Winchester.

Bolsover Castle
Bolsover, Derbyshire
Enchanting early 17th-century mansion set high on a wooded hilltop.

Boscobel House
Nr Shackerley, Shropshire
King Charles II hid here after the battle of Worcester.

Brinkburn Priory
Nr Rothbury, Northumberland
Fine example of 12th-century architecture, almost perfectly preserved.

Brodsword Hall
Brodsword, South Yorkshire
Beautiful Victorian country house with contents that have survived intact since the 1860s.

Brougham Castle
Nr Penrith, Cumbria
Impressive ruins, including an early 13th-century keep.

Bushmead Priory
Colmworth, Bedfordshire
Rare medieval refectory of an Augustinian priory.

Byland Abbey
Thirsk, North Yorkshire
Hauntingly lovely ruin in the shadow of Hambleton Hills.

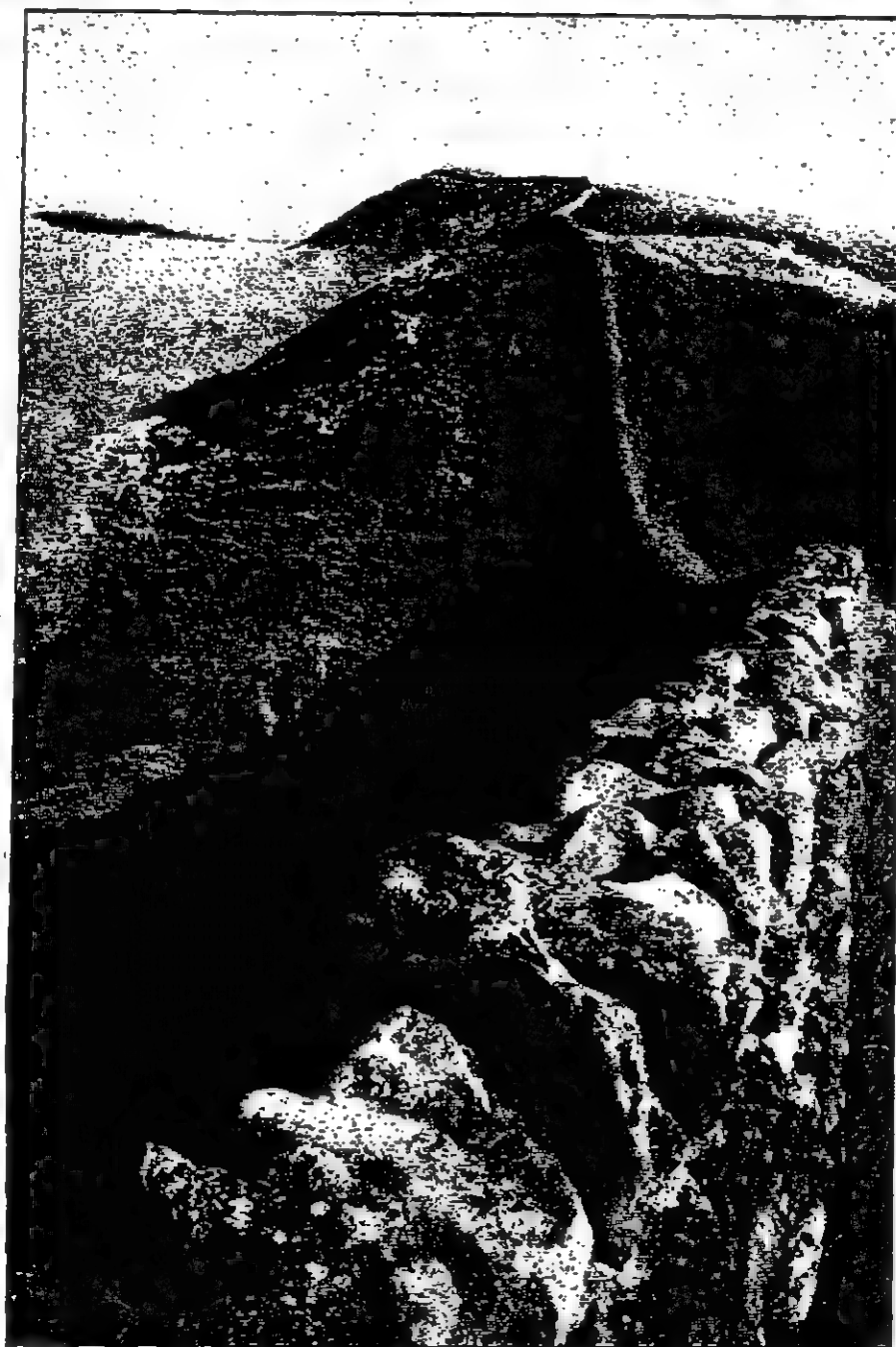
Calshot Castle
Nr Fawley, Hampshire
Built by Henry VIII to command the sea passage to Southampton; special 1995 exhibition.

Camber Castle
Nr Rye, Sussex
Rare Henrician fort surviving in its original plan.

Carisbrooke Castle
Nr Newport, Isle of Wight
Ancient fortress in a commanding position; centre-stage of the greatest dramas in English history, including the imprisonment of Charles I.

Carlisle Castle
Carlisle, Cumbria
New exhibition marks the 250th anniversary of the Jacobite Rising, when Bonnie Prince Charlie took the castle in 1745.

Castle Acre Priory
Nr Castle Acre, Norfolk
West front of priory's 12th-century church still rises to its full height; also prior's lodgings and chapel.



Landmarks in English history: Hadrian's Wall, left, Audley End House in Essex, top, and Battle Abbey in East Sussex

Castle Rising Castle
Nr King's Lynn, Norfolk
Fine mid-12th century domestic keep.

Chester Fort
Nr Chollerford, Northumberland
Cavalry fort near bridge carrying Hadrian's Wall across the Tyne.

Chiswick House
Southwest London
One of the first English Palladian villas, built in about 1725; internationally renowned.

Chysauster
Nr Gulval, Cornwall
Deserted Roman-Cornish village with a "street" of eight houses.

Cleeve Abbey
Washford, Somerset
Built in the 13th century; one of the few monastic sites to retain a complete set of cloister buildings.

Clifford's Tower
York, North Yorkshire
Tower on one of two mottes thrown up by William the Conqueror to hold York.

Conisbrough Castle
Nr Conisbrough, South Yorkshire
Oldest circular keep in England.

and one of the finest medieval buildings.

Corbridge
Nr Corbridge, Northumberland
Originally a fort, then a supply depot on Hadrian's Wall.

Dartmouth Castle
Nr Dartmouth, Devon
One of the first castles constructed with artillery in mind; 460 years old.

Deal Castle
Nr Deal, Kent
Built by Henry VIII; fascinating passages, battlements and a huge basement with an exhibition.

Denny Abbey
Nr Cambridge, Cambridgeshire
Remains of 12th-century Benedictine abbey, which also housed Knights Templar and muns.

Dover Castle
Dover, Kent
Magnificent castle, in constant use for 800 years.

Dunstanburgh Castle
Nr Alnwick, Northumberland
Wonderful 14th-century castle built on a 100ft crag.

Dymchurch Martello Tower
Dymchurch, Kent
One of many artillery towers that formed a chain of strongholds against Napoleon.

Eilat Castle
Nr Northampton
Borlase castle built in the 14th century.

Farleigh Hungerford Castle
Farleigh Hungerford, Somerset
Ruins of a 14th-century castle; chapel contains wall paintings, stained glass and Sir Thomas Hungerford's tomb.

Farnham Castle Keep
Nr Farnham, Surrey
Motte and bailey castle; in continuous occupation since 12th century.

Finchale Priory
Nr Durham, Co Durham
Beautiful 13th-century ruins in woods beside the River Wear.

Fort Brockhurst
Elson, Hampshire
Built in the 19th century to protect Portsmouth.

Framlingham Castle
Framlingham, Suffolk
Superb 12th-century castle; viewed from the outside, it looks almost the same as when it was built.

Furness Abbey
Nr Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria
Founded in 1123 by Stephen, later King of England; there is an

exhibition and a museum containing fine stone carvings.

Gainsborough Old Hall
Gainsborough, Lincolnshire
Large medieval house with a magnificent great hall.

Gisborough Priory
Gisborough, Cleveland
Augustine priory; remains include the gatehouse and part of a 14th-century church.

Goodrich Castle
Nr Ross-on-Wye, Hereford & Worcester
Magnificent red sandstone castle with a 12th-century keep and extensive remains.

Grime's Graves
Nr Thetford, Norfolk
Remarkable Neolithic flint mines, unique in England, comprising more than 300 pits and shafts.

Hailes Abbey
Nr Winchcombe, Gloucestershire
Cistercian abbey built in the 13th century; good sculpture.

Halesowen Abbey
Nr Birmingham, West Midlands
Remains of an abbey founded by King John in the 13th century.

Hardwick Old Hall
Nr Chesterfield, Derbyshire
Large ruined house, finished in 1591; displays Bess of Hardwick's innovative planning and decorative plasterwork.

Haughmond Abbey
Nr Shrewsbury, Shropshire
Extensive remains of 12th-century Augustine abbey.

Hellfire Corner
Dover, Kent
Tunnels excavated as a defence against Napoleon; used as planning quarters in the Second World War and only recently opened to the public.

Helmsey Castle
Helmsey, North Yorkshire
Built in the 12th century; spectacular earthworks surround a ruined Norman keep.

Houses of the Roman Fort
Nr Barton Mill, Nthmb
Most complete remains of a Roman fort in Britain.

Hurst Castle
Nr Keyhaven, Hampshire
One of the most sophisticated fortresses built by Henry VIII;

strengthened in the 19th and 20th centuries.

Jewel Tower
Westminster, London
Built in about 1365 to house the personal treasure of Edward III.

Kenilworth Castle
Kenilworth, Warwickshire
Gaunt ruin of what was once the power-base of the most influential baron in England.

Kirby Hall
Nr Corby, Northamptonshire
Outstanding example of a large, stone-built Elizabethan mansion.

Kirkham Priory
Nr Malton, North Yorkshire
Ruins of an Augustine priory; magnificent gatehouse.

After June 3/4, production of the Times/NPI passport at any Treasures of Britain site will entitle the holder to a range of concessions, including two tickets for the price of one at most properties. For part two of the English Heritage list and further details of the Treasures of Britain campaign, see page 35 of *The Times* on Monday.



Neoclassical masterpiece: Belsay Hall in Northumberland

THE CAMPAIGN

THE 1995 Times/NPI Treasures of Britain campaign offers readers exclusive discounts at 100 historic sites in England, Scotland and Wales this summer.

Organised in conjunction with English Heritage and the Historic Houses Association, the campaign covers monuments, abbeys, castles, palaces, stately homes, manor houses, country parks and formal gardens from June to September.

To visit these sites at a discount, readers must obtain the Times/NPI Passport to the Treasures of Britain. Full details appear below.

From next Saturday until the end of September, *The Times* will publish a weekly column in the Weekend section advising readers on special events and concessions at historic sites.

Each week, *The Times* is publishing an AA-recommended tour guide incorporating heritage sites. The second guide in the series appears in Car 95 today.

WHAT TO DO

To receive a passport, simply collect six tokens from *The Times*. The first was printed last Saturday; the final token will appear in next Saturday's paper. Complete the coupon below and send it with the six tokens and a first-class stamp to: The Times/NPI Passport Offer, Spero Communications, PO Box 349, Maidstone, Kent ME15 6YU.



To obtain a Times/NPI Passport to the Treasures of Britain and a guide describing 100 English, Welsh and Scottish properties participating in the scheme, complete the panel below and send the form, enclosing a first-class stamp and six tokens, to The Times/NPI Passport Offer, Spero Communications, PO Box 349, Maidstone, Kent ME15 6YU. The guide includes details of the concessions available, and the passport also entitles holders and their children to free admission to more than 130 of English Heritage's 400 sites on the weekend of June 3/4, normally only available to English Heritage members.



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Saturday portrait: Dennis Conner, by David Miller

Inspirational skipper weathering another storm of controversy

Is Dennis Conner, one of the finest match-racers in yachting history, no worse than a loveable ogre, nasty but nice, or is he a straightforward involuntary boor? His more loyal friends say he is working to improve his bruised public image, yet the truth is that even some Americans hope the man who has won the America's Cup four times will now lose it for the second time.

In the land of the compulsive winning mentality, something must be seriously amiss to cause such loss of public sympathy. There is more to it than the manipulation of the race regulations that has seen Conner win a defenders' final series from which he had already been eliminated, and then switch to a rival boat to contest the challenge round against *Black Magic*, the New Zealand challenger. This campaign has witnessed the best and worst of the famed sporting street-fighter.

While his dogged, occasionally inspired leadership has extracted the maximum from *Stars & Stripes*, the slowest of three United States hulls in the series, his on-shore behaviour has often been surly or loudish. Despite all the hyperbole about American solidarity, when Conner's crew were allowed to jump ship onto *Young America*, the rival maintenance team engraved teardrops on the face of the mermaid that decorates *Young America's* bow.

Throughout the series, Conner consistently ignored the women's crew of *Mighty Mary*, never speaking to Leslie Egnot, their soft-voiced but resolute helmswoman, and condoning sexist insults by the crew during close-range manoeuvres at sea. At a cocktail party, Conner asked *Mighty Mary's* navigator, Annie Nelson, the wife of *Young America's* designer, Bruce Nelson, a former crew colleague of his, what it was like being with a bunch of lesbians. She threw a full glass over him, obliging him to return home. An embarrassed Bill Koch, owner of *Mighty Mary*, lamely attempted to excuse the "locker-room jest".

This is the man who, some years

ago, tried to prevent Paul Cayard, now his helmsman, from becoming a member of the San Diego Yacht Club. Cayard was then the protégé of Tom Blackaller, Conner's arch-rival. Cayard, generously, has forgiven him.

"In the Eighties, Dennis was single-minded and didn't care about anything except winning," Cayard has said. "If he was rude, it didn't matter to him. Now, at 52, he's more concerned about what he is perceived to be."

Not always. At the final media conference before the challenge round, Conner stomped irritably out of the meeting at the finish, refusing to answer a simple question on his emotional mood going into his seventh final. "John can answer that," he snapped.

John Marshall, the head of the

"There is a defiance about him that is noble. He has refused to concede, whatever the odds"

Young America syndicate, has done a rapid somersault. Three weeks ago, he was proclaiming "the end of the Conner era". Now, suddenly once more in harmony, Conner is worthy of support.

If they gave British-style international caps for America's Cup races, Conner would probably wear his in bed. There is the suspicion that without the separation from more normal life when aboard a yacht under sail, or the insularity of a loyal, similarly obsessive crew, he feels insecure, even inferior.

Off the water, he is like a lion-tamer without his lion. His voice carries a hesitancy. Failure, even the possibility of failure, bothers him. Hence, perhaps, his evasive response to the question on his mood when facing a Kiwi boat that has won 37 of its 38 races in the series. For a man who has achieved all he has, not winning an Olympic gold medal nags him.

The defeat at Newport, Rhode Island, by *Australia II* in 1983 is scorching on his soul. I remember, as if it were yesterday, him shouldering his way through the milling crowds of joyous Australian supporters to attend the post-race conference, having inexplicably surrendered a winning lead in the seventh and last race. This was the master tactician who never usually made an error, whose first biography was entitled *No Excuse to Lose*.

He was alone and close to tears. The shell-shocked New York Yacht Club committee, who had stood frozen in disbelief on the deck of their committee boat, in defeat now abandoned the hick "loser" from California. "We sailed well, I'm proud of *Liberty's* crew," Conner said, before hastening out into darkness, knowing they had excelled against the innovative Australian boat. In that moment, you felt for him. There is a defiance in him that is noble. It was there when, eyes bloodshot and skin parched by the southern sun, he regained the cup in 1987. It has been there throughout this campaign, considering that his underfunded *Stars & Stripes* was the slowest boat. He has refused to concede, whatever the odds.

It is this which makes Tom Whidden, his ever-loyal tactician, say: "I feel his [bad] image is ridiculous. He's a nice guy."

That Conner's emotions are close to the surface was apparent after *Stars & Stripes* came from four minutes behind to qualify as the United States defender, *Mighty Mary* having sailed into a windless hole on the final leg. Barely across the finishing line, Conner stated: "Anybody in touch with reality would not be looking forward to defending the cup with this boat."

Later, some time after midnight, neighbours at Conner's rented house were awakened by shouting in the street. Conner was loudly arguing with Daintry, his young second wife. "You can't go out again, it's not safe [at this time of night]," she was insisting. Conner, clearly weary from celebrations, was proclaiming: "I beat them all today... and I need a faster boat!"



ILLUSTRATION BY STEVE MARTIN

Such is Conner's reputation among contemporaries that Gary Jobson, a former cup skipper and now commentator, has forecast an American victory over the formidable opponents discreetly led by Peter Blake. Jobson reasons that *Young America* is the fastest defender and has been tested by more close races than *Black Magic*, and that no New Zealander has previously sailed in the final.

Yet the charge of manipulation

hangs heavily over Conner; not least that, having switched boats, he has also been permitted by the race committee to transfer *Stars & Stripes* allowance of new sails, less expended than *Young America's* because of budget shortage.

Conner defends the changes, saying that the regulations allowed alteration "by mutual consent of the three participating defenders" and that there has been no complaint from Bill Koch. The New Zealanders may sense sharp

practice; yet their own publicity brochure, published four months ago, specifically made the point that Conner could conceivably change boats.

Expediency has lived side by side with Conner a long while. During lengthy court battles between the Sail America Foundation and Michael Fay's ill-fated New Zealand challenger, San Diego Yacht Club's brief to arbitrators stated: "It is repugnant to any sense of fair play and sports-

manlike competition, as well as to the Deed of Gift [of the cup], for the syndicate of Sail America to have the opportunity to manipulate the rules, trials, defender selection and site of the next America's Cup races, in order to favour its own yacht and its own skipper."

When the opening gun fires today at 21.15 BST, Conner is fighting not just a slick rival seeking New Zealand's first win in four attempts, but for his own credibility.

THE TIMES

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Hamed set on early disposal of Mexican

By SRIKUMAR SEN
BOXING CORRESPONDENT

NASEEM HAMED, the World Boxing Council international super-bantamweight champion, who has walked through all opposition placed before him, defends against an awkward Mexican, Enrique Angles at Shepton Mallet tonight.

The Sheffield showman who, according to his promoter, Frank Warren, makes the outrageous Hector Camacho look like a shrinking violet, should perform his stuff on the unsuspecting visitor. Hamed, who has made £1 million boxing for Warren, is not likely to let Angles get in the way of more millions. Hamed said: "He moves a bit, but I think I'll be too strong."

Brendan Ingle, Hamed's trainer, said: "He [Angles] is sharp and accurate, but Naz is really getting his body weight into his punches now. Anybody he hits he'll knock out. We are not underestimating the fellow, but I can't see him going more than five rounds. Naz could even do it in three."

Hill's, the bookmakers, also believe the bout will not go more than five rounds. All the same, Angles is believed to be an improvement on the last Mexican imported for Hamed, Amado Castro, who is described by Eric Armit, the boxing statistician, as being a "well worn, face-first plodder" by the time he met Hamed.

Angles is a different proposition. He is young — at 22, just a year older than Hamed — and at 5ft 7in, four inches taller. The former Mexican super-bantamweight champion is a southpaw, like Hamed, and an ambitious boxer-puncher who has never been on the floor.

Hamed will be the Mexican's first world-class opponent. Because of his height and southpaw stance, for a while he could certainly make it difficult for Hamed to work him out. But it is unlikely that the Mexican will be able to stand up to the Yorkshireman's firepower for much longer than three or four rounds.

Warders no substitute for prisoners in final analysis

There are a number of drawbacks to being in prison. One of these is the depressing fact that they will not let you go out, even if you really want to. For example, supposing you got to the Les Bishop Cup final and had the chance to take on Victoria Rangers. They are still going to say, "I'm frightfully sorry but you have to stay in prison."

So it was that Channings Wood Prison, in Devon, were forced to field 11 substitutes in the aforementioned final. The side, an effective outfit in the South Devon League when fielding a team of prisoners, was forced to line up with warders. Moral: poachers tend to be fitter than gamekeepers. The screws lost 16-1.

The team manager, Billy Walker, who is 54 and a PE

instructor at the prison, had to play himself. The average age of the side was 43. Walker summed up: "They — surely a football manager should say we? — have to play all their league matches inside, both home and away. But with a game as important as a cup final, it has to be played on a neutral ground. Despite our appeals to the Home Office, they wouldn't let the lads out."

"It wouldn't have been so bad, but we didn't have a goal. Our normal goalies finished his sentence last week and he promised to come back for the final but he didn't turn up. So one of the staff, David Fay, went in goal in his place but he was injured a few minutes into the game and had to go off."

"Because of staff shortages at the prison, we simply didn't

SIMON BARNES
On Saturday

have enough warders to take a substitute with us, so we played most of the match with ten men."

Rare double

The sun shines, a cuckoo calls outside the window and the first school cricket report winds gracefully from the fax machine. I learn that James Beechcroft and Kris (who taught his parents to spell?) Jones both did the hat-trick in the same match, playing for Bloxham School under-15s against Cokethorpe School. The only problem is what to do with the match ball, traditionally presented by the school to anyone who performs the hat-trick. The team coach, Nigel Furley, is wondering how to divide a cricket ball in two. Life really ought to be like this.

Press gangs

We British journalists have it soft. Our hooligans tend to beat up each other, or, in extremis, the police. In Italy, they turn on the press. Blaming the press for the evils of life is a sport of global dimension, and one taken with particular seriousness by Mandrake, of Foggia. Mandrake, real name Emilio Cavelli, specialises in terrorising journalists. He charged to meet two of his favourite football writers in a bar and allegedly threatened them with death and attacked them. A third journalist has also been the subject of death threats. This follows yet another alleged death threat, made to the same two journalists. It is claimed he assaulted in the bar. It happens that this particular threat was made two years ago, and criminal action was taken against Mandrake. In the remorseless way of Italian justice, the case comes up for its second hearing this coming Thursday. This column is not taking this lightly. I will keep a sharp lookout for potential Man-

Same old story

It is difficult to reinvent yourself. Mike Tyson is known to have some problem areas in his life, most particularly with sex and with motor cars. Since his release from prison, he has bought himself three Bentley Azure convertibles, which seems rather a lot. He has also been answering questions under oath at an attorney's office in New York about sex. Phyllis Polaner, the former press secretary of his former wife, Robin Givens, has been claiming sexual harassment. She hit Tyson with a civil lawsuit in August 1990, but since then the matter, like Tyson himself, has been in cold storage.

Dog's life

Unlike football, sled-dog racing really is a life and death matter. At least, it is for the dogs. The Iditarod, the great trans-Alaska race, is having a crackdown, not before time, on sled-drivers — mushers, to be technical — who drive their dogs to death. Two dogs died on the trail during the event this year. A new rule has been brought in, under which any competitor who kills a dog will be disqualified. However, you are left off if you have a dog die of what they call "external forces". This means if your dog is killed by a moose.

Never mind the Iditarod: think of the poor loonies who will set out at six this evening to row from Arklow, in Ireland, to Aberystwyth, in Wales. Nine teams aim to make the trip in fixed-seat longboats; there are two women crews and one mixed. The event, which is called the Celtic Challenge, is sponsored by Stena Sealink. The firm clearly does not see the longboats as a threat to business.

Ten years on, burns unit that saved lives after Valley Parade fire faces closure

Bradford's survivors still refuse to forget



ROB HUGHES
Weekend View

The Bradford City team whose promotion celebration turned into football's most horrific inferno ten years ago will come together again tomorrow night in the Valley Parade grandstand that was rebuilt, literally, out of the ashes of May 11, 1985. The players' reunion has a compelling purpose: to raise funds and to try to help save the burns unit that worked heroically to keep down the number of dead to 56 spectators, and to soothe the wounds of 285 more.

Because of fire regulations, the banqueting hall of the Valley Parade stand can seat only 130 people. The numbers were quickly subscribed for tomorrow's dinner, £7 per head being donated to the plastic surgery and burns research unit at Bradford University which, with proceeds from a raffle of players' personal mementoes, should add £1,000 to a bucket collection taken during last week's home game against Blackpool.

Perhaps crazy in this era of multi-million pound transfers, indeed of footballing millionaires, the burns unit requires just £30,000 to keep going for another year — £50,000 that, to the well-heeled Premiership clubs, is a pittance. But Bradford are below that line of wealth; they operate almost where they did a decade ago, and there is no promotion on the horizon this weekend as there was then when that young team won the third division championship.

Peter Jackson, the captain then and today, at 33, a player with Chester, planned tomorrow's reunion. "It seemed the appropriate time to get the players together to see if we can benefit the burns unit," he says. Jackson, a defender on the field and something of a

defender of the conscience of often maligned football players, has worked with Jean Calvert, the secretary of the Bradford City Supporters' Club, who, with her then young daughter, had been in the stand on the day of the fire.

The player and the supporter are determined to pool their efforts to rescue a unit in distress. At the dinner they will renew acquaintance with David Sharpe, the consultant whose unit it is and whose efforts in 1985 quickly brought together a third of the country's leading plastic surgeons to work night and day in the aftermath of the tragedy.

Sharpe has tried every avenue he can to raise funds. "I have tried the Millennium Fund, tried everything I can think of, and now it seems wonderful that the players and supporters are coming to our aid," he says.

Indeed, so expert had his young research team in Bradford become that they went, free of charge, to assist in the Piper Alpha disaster of 1988. When the struggle to keep his unit going became intense, Sharpe wrote to the late Armand Hammer, the chairman of Occidental Petroleum, and received the chilling response: "It is not company policy" [to make donations].

He is not surprised that it is the Bradford-born Jackson who now leads the public campaign to save the unit. Jackson had been a frequent visitor to the 70 in-patients immediately after the fire, had been prominent in the raising of £4 million for the disaster fund and had never, though his career took him to Newcastle United and now to Chester "gone away".

Like many stoic Yorkshire folk, Jackson sees his effort as "nowt special". He says: "We couldn't stop to think very



Jackson, as Bradford City captain, attended the memorial service for the fire's victims in 1985 and today reflects on what more he can do to help

much of the psychological effects in 1985. It was something we had to get on with. I was captain, it was my responsibility to do what I could and to lead the players."

So, tomorrow, Stuart McCall comes down from Glasgow, from Middlesbrough comes John Hendrie... from all their various clubs come nine of the team. Jackson cannot locate just two, Tony Clegg and Martin Singleton.

If they hear of the reunion, they are welcome. So would be Joanne Baron, the youngest heroine of the tragedy, if only she were willing to attend. Miss Baron was *The Times* face of "that awful disaster, a child of elfin looks and shy manner who, at the age of ten, attending her first football match, had escaped from the fire, but returned back into the flames to rescue an old man."

She saw the man fall down some steps. She climbed over seats and helped him to his feet. He fell again, knocking Joanne over. Her legs became burned, her hand will bear the scar of the fire for life, but still she struggled to drag the man

down to a wall where police, the other often unheralded heroes of such affairs, hauled both the child and the pensioner to safety.

Today Joanne Baron is reluctant to expose herself to further publicity. Even on the day of her commendation, she refused to see it as an act of courage. Her words were: "I just saw the man."

Her spirit, and that of 50 other people whom the local chief constable commended for bravery, undoubtedly saved many lives. It was, out of the dreadful flames of a



Joanne Baron was pictured with the singer Shakin' Stevens after her commendation

stadium tragedy caused by ignoring the warnings, the thankful side of human nature, the reminder that, for all that is ever said or written about football supporters, they share the capacity for caring and trusting those whom they accompany to the stadium.



DAVID THOMSON

Ferguson prepares to turn the screw on Blackburn

By Peter Ball and Russell Kempson

A MONTH ago, Manchester United looked to have thrown away their hopes of the FA Carling Premiership title, with three goalless home draws in four matches. Instead, for the umpteenth time this season, United have the opportunity of exerting real pressure on Blackburn Rovers, when they play Sheffield Wednesday at Old Trafford tomorrow.

Blackburn's sudden decline — they have collected only four points from a possible 12 — has again opened the way. There have been signs, too, that it is all beginning to take its toll, with Kenny Dalglish, the Blackburn manager, complaining yesterday that the sport's "snipers" were out to get them. However, time is running out and United cannot let the chance slip.

"Whether or not we are surprised to have another chance, we're there and we have to take it," Alex Ferguson, the United manager, said yesterday. "That is the important thing. We've had too many chances already and blown them. It is now definitely the last chance." If United beat Wednesday, they will cut Blackburn's lead to two points, with two games remaining. Blackburn's next match is at home to Newcastle United on Monday.

United's re-entry into the race was signalled by the 3-2 away win at Coventry City on Monday, when Andy Cole scored two classic striker's goals in a vibrant performance. "He is improving all the time," Ferguson said. "He has been outstanding in training and it is not just his goalscoring. His overall play is getting better and better."

Wednesday may need a point to be safe from relegation but Aston Villa are in greater danger, with a lot depending on how much motivation Liverpool can muster on their visit to Villa Park this afternoon. "There will be no complacency from us," Roy Evans, the Liverpool manager, said. "How could any player be complacent in the atmosphere generated by a full Villa Park? A question, with Villa only two points above the danger zone, that might be addressed to some of Brian Little's players."

Everton, who may still need a win to be safe, could have wished for easier visitors than Southampton in their last home game, while Crystal Palace continue their fight against increasing odds with a home game against West Ham United, who are also flirting with the possibility of ending their League football next season.

Defeat for Palace would not quite condemn them but a similar result for Norwich City, combined with draws for Villa and Everton, would as good as send the Norfolk side plummeting from the premier league. Norwich travel to Leeds United, who are chasing a UEFA Cup place and have won seven of their last ten league matches.

There is little to decide in the first division, unless Barnsley surprisingly pip Tranmere Rovers for a play-off place, but the second division offers an intriguing situation if Birmingham City draw 1-1 with Huddersfield Town and Brentford beat Bristol Rovers 4-0. It would leave Birmingham and Brentford level at the top on points, goals scored and goals conceded — forcing a play-off at a neutral venue.

Pittodrie opponents haunted by spectre of relegation



Snelders returning

A GLIMPSE of the good old days can fill a supporter with foreboding. For weeks, images from Aberdeen's 1983 Cup Winners' Cup final win over Real Madrid and Dundee United's defeat of Barcelona in a UEFA Cup tie four years later have been flashing up on Scotland's television screens. The glory, however, is there only as a reminder of the decline at both clubs.

This afternoon at Pittodrie the successors of those hallowed teams will attempt to consign one another to the first division. Aberdeen are in the automatic relegation position at the bottom of the table, but Dundee United stand only a point ahead of them. Should Aberdeen lose their fate is sealed and United, with a single fixture left, will, at the very worst, have a play-off to ensure survival.

Defeat for the visitors, however, would make them favourites for automatic demotion. Much attention has been paid to the Pittodrie club's plight throughout the season, but the panic in Dundee is a more abrupt development. Since Billy Kirkwood was appointed manager in succession to Ivan Golac last month his team have played five matches and lost four of them.

That run has hurried them towards Aberdeen at the sort of pace that usually leaves skid marks. Kirkwood may have sensed the harrowing nature of his new profession only nine seconds into his first game when Rangers scored the opener in a 2-0 win. Last weekend Hibernian scored the only goal, for the sake of variety, in the closing seconds of the match at

Kevin McCarr reports on the troubles of Aberdeen and Dundee United, who meet this afternoon

Tannadice. An improvement in luck is certainly required at Pittodrie, for Aberdeen might have picked the four United players who will be suspended this afternoon: Brian Welsh, Billy McKinlay, Dave Bowman and Gordon Strachan. The inherent weakness of the team with which he is left forces Kirkwood to a shuddering consideration of relegation.

"It would hurt very badly," he said. "I was only appointed in time for the

last seven games but I would forever be associated with it. A lot of people say it would be beneficial to go down and have a season to regroup but I can't agree."

Both United and, to a lesser extent, Aberdeen are victims of the lack of talent emerging in Scotland. At Tannadice there was a particular pride taken in the knack of turning schoolboys such as Paul Sturrock, David Narey and Maurice Malpas into internationals. Nowadays, however, raw material is in short supply.

Accordingly, United have tried to rebuild by buying budget-priced ready-made players from abroad. This has helped maintain the strict wage structure at Tannadice that ensures that the club would take no

debt with them into the first division but very few of the obscure signings have made any impact.

If United do remain in the top flight they will surely have to find a way of rearranging their budget. As Aberdeen know, however, even extravagance has its risks. They spent heavily under Willie Miller's management and acquired only an ill-assorted team.

His successor, Roy Aitken, though, saw Aberdeen win at Tynecastle last weekend and will today reintroduce his goalkeeper, Theo Snelders, after a two-month absence through injury. Every ticket for a crucial fixture was sold by Wednesday, but then they do say there also used to be an enthusiastic audience for public hangings.

Black Magic can break Conner's spell

Barry Pickthall finds the New Zealand team confident of wresting the America's Cup from the determined grasp of the San Diego YC

semi-finals, was then allowed to compete in the finals simply because his sponsors had not received the television airtime they deserved; or how, having won the Citizen Cup defender trials in his own yacht, *Stars & Stripes*, he can defend the trophy using a rival boat.

Conner went some way towards rationalising recent events by pointing to the 144-year history of the cup and how the New York YC, which ruled supreme for 132 of those years before finally succumbing to Alan Bond's Australian assault in 1983, often mixed and matched crews and yachts to gain the strongest possible defence.

There is no doubt that the crew of *Stars & Stripes* sailing *Young America* provide the strongest combination for the defence. *Young America*, skippered during the trials by Olympic silver medal-winner

Kevin Mahaney, went into the finals with a 21-7 win/loss record against 13-15 for *Stars & Stripes*. It was only when *Young America* experimented with winglets on the bottom of her rudder and Mahaney was distracted by divorce papers that cracks began to appear in the campaign. The winglets have since been removed, but few other changes, outside a new set of sails, have been made since Conner's crew

took over the yacht five days ago. Russell Coutts and his crew have had much longer to prepare and have been working daily to make improvements since qualifying on April 19 by winning the Louis Vuitton Cup trials during which they had a remarkable 37-1 win/loss record.

That single defeat, at the hands of John Bertrand's one-Australia, came on a day when the syndicate head, Peter Blake, who mans the mainsheet traveller on *Black Magic*, and his lucky red socks were not onboard. Coutts is superstitious enough to insist that Blake's English wife, Pippa, must put the rolled up socks onboard if tendinitis in the elbows keeps Blake off the boat.

Statistics show that the New Zealanders have a two to six per cent advantage upwind in light conditions and

and are almost equal in speed downwind. Above ten knots, however, there seems little between *Black Magic* and *Young America*.

In these conditions it will be team work, not technology that decides the outcome. Yesterday, Conner confessed he could see no weaknesses in the New Zealand camp. "They have the best sailmaker in the world in Tom Schnackenberg, one of the top match-race skipper in the world, and Brad Butterworth as tactician."

Robert Hopkins, who was the navigator on *Young America* until this week, believes the Kiwis have an edge. "They are going to be tough to beat. Their boat is very fast." David Allan-Williams, the British designer within the New Zealand team is also confident. "It will be tight, but it is my bet the final score will be 5-2. None of us liked the prospect of racing the women's team, but the lads are relishing the prospect of knocking Conner off. They have a few scores to settle."

Conway leads way for England juniors

THE England under-21 hockey team won the junior European Nations Cup qualifying tournament at Genoa yesterday with a 2-0 victory over Italy, securing maximum points from all five matches (Sydney Friskin writes).

How many from this team will exceed the age limit by the time the event is held in Denmark next year remains to be seen; but there is little doubt that the squad that went to Genoa contained some of the best young prospects in the country. These included Nick Conway, who finished with nine goals, and Daniel Hall, with eight.

In the match yesterday, Hall opened the scoring for England in the 42nd minute from a short corner. Alistair Boyse hit the second goal in the 57th minute with a fine solo effort. Scotland finished third with a 2-1 victory over Portugal, but they will not be in Denmark. Only two teams, England and Italy, qualified from this tournament.

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Celtic Swing the star turn of momentous weekend

By RICHARD EVANS
RACING CORRESPONDENT

COMETH the hour, cometh the horse? An historic weekend which sees the first Sunday race meetings staged in Britain with on-course betting could be capped by the exploits of one of the most exciting Flat horses in recent times.

Celtic Swing, who is threatening to exhaust the sporting superlatives with his racecourse performances, is likely to be sent off the shortest-priced favourite for the Madagans 2,000 Guineas at Newmarket this afternoon since the mighty Nijinsky obliged in 1970.

If the unbeaten colt, owned by Peter Savill and trained at Angmering Park by Lady Anne Herries, beats his ten rivals, he will be hailed as one of the greats of the Turf, alongside the likes of Tudor Minstrel, Brigadier Gerard and El Gran Senor — and be as short as even money to win the Derby at Epsom.

If he meets with defeat, the bookmakers will have been saved a massive pay-out and have every reason to look forward to the inaugural Sunday race meetings.

While Swingmania has reached fever pitch in a relatively short space of time, the arrival of on-

course betting on Sundays follows a slow-burn campaign which began a decade ago and only came to fruition last May when MPs voted by a majority of 101 in favour of changing the law.

Tomorrow Newmarket will stage the Madagans 1,000 Guineas, contested by 15 fillies, while Salisbury puts on a six-race card. A further 22 Sunday meetings will take place this year.

The British Horseracing Board, which spearheaded the final push towards legalising betting on Sunday, is keen to attract a new audience to Sunday fixtures — particularly first-time, young and

family-orientated racegoers — and is marketing racing on the seventh day with the slogan "Sunday Is Funday At the Races".

A record crowd of 25,000 is

1,000 Guineas preview 41
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expected at Newmarket today and tomorrow and should Celtic Swing justify the hype which has been heaped on his head, the impact could be critical for a sport which has made rapid strides in the 1990s

and is keen to become more consumer friendly.

Nick Lees, clerk of the course at Newmarket, reflected yesterday: "I think he is the first Flat racing horse since Nijinsky that has truly caught the imagination of the racing public. I can tell from the advance bookings we have had and the questions people have been asking us that he really is considered a superstar. Let's hope he lives up to it."

Peter Savill, the colt's Yorkshire-born owner, who made himself a multi-millionaire from magazine publishing, is reputed to have paid around £20,000 for the unfashion-

ably-bred colt. Victory today would make the horse one of the most valuable in the world with a potential stud value estimated to be £10 million.

Somehow Savill has kept remarkably calm amid all the razzmatazz of recent weeks. Yesterday, as the sun dried out the Rowley Mile course at Newmarket, he expressed some concern that firmish ground would not be ideal for his horse — but his confidence about the outcome remains intact.

"Everything has gone well and the horse is extremely well. He worked nicely earlier this week. He has tightened up following his

recent run at Newbury, and his blood tests show he is absolutely spot on and we are very hopeful. "I have been in racing a long time and had a lot of setbacks. This would be the biggest, probably of all time, but I am ready for it. If it happens, my gut feeling is that he will win, but you never know. It is a very good Guineas and there are several unbeaten horses in the race. I learnt a long time ago that unbeaten horses are good horses until they are beaten."

Savill should know. And at around 3.45 this afternoon his unbeaten horse may be regarded as one of the best for generations.

Fates conspire against Bath

Injured Hall deprived of fitting finale

By DAVID HANDS, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

THE fates have conspired against Bath all season and yesterday they struck their last, gleeful blow by removing John Hall, the captain, from English rugby union's showpiece, the Pilkington Cup final, against Wasps at Twickenham today. It was to be Hall's last appearance, at 33, before retiring.

That so distinguished a career should have ended anonymously when Hall rugged off with a damaged shoulder in the first half of the league game with Sale last week is sad for club and player. Late on Thursday Bath lost another international, Mike Carr, with a strained hamstring, but only when he underwent a tackling exercise at the Recreation Ground yesterday morning did Hall realise his first-class career was over.

"I could probably ghost my way through an ordinary match but not a cup final," Hall said. Finals mean much to Bath. They have been in eight of them since 1984 and have won every one. Hall playing in six and raising the trophy as captain last season as part of a league and cup double. Today, part of Bath's motivation was to bid a happy farewell to him and to Tony Swift, the wing who is also retiring, and words could not describe Hall's disappointment.

The captaincy passes to Phil de Glanville and Steve Ojomoh, yet another of Bath's chain of internationals, joins

the back row, while Richard Butler, 22, plays in his first final against England's most capped stand-off half, Rob Andrew. "We know we are up against it," Hall said. "There'll be no problem with motivation."

It has been that kind of tortuous season for Bath, almost inevitably after the departure last year of the most experienced half-back pairing in England, Richard Hall and Stuart Barnes, and of their coach, Jack Rowell, to the national team. That they have sustained a challenge for the league and cup is a mark of their quality in what, by

Expansive game 40
Swaleas Cup preview 40

common consent, was always going to be a rebuilding season.

In addition, they have been twisted and turned by the selectors of three countries. One Ireland, two Scotland and now three England internationals, plus an England squad prop, John Mallett, sit this match out in what has become a challenge to the Bath ethos that you are only as good as your next match. Hence their positive selection of young players such as Gareth Adams and Kevin Yates, and the serious consideration they gave to omitting Jeremy Guscott from the midfield.

Commitment to Bath is a credo to which others may pay

lip service but the five World Cup players who grace their ranks will be expected to observe it to the letter.

Yet for the first time since 1988, Bath could end a season without one of the two leading domestic trophies. The league has already gone to Leicester and in Bath's way today stand the team they beat in the finals of 1986 and 1987. For many people the London club have been the find of the season, with their broad, 15-man game that has carried them to Twickenham and to a record 58 league tries.

Can they play it on Twickenham's broad acres, in front of a 60,000 full house? They lost only 12-9 at the Recreation Ground in the autumn and won the return league match 11-10 at Sudbury, but the need to have something to show for their efforts is becoming paramount. "We need this trophy to back up our style," Dean Ryan, their captain, who seeks to break into the duopoly created by Bath and Leicester, said. "For us the great aura surrounding Bath has gone. We have a 50-50 chance and that makes a change because we have always been underdogs before."

Remarkably in modern rugby, neither side offers a dominating lineout. There is no bigger heart in English rugby than Nigel Redman's but the stuffing has been knocked out of him by his omission from the England World Cup squad. If ever there was a time to raise his game it is now, but the loss of Hall also removes the man who won most of Bath's lineout ball in the critical league match against Leicester. Wasps offer a converted back-row forward, Matt Greenwood, at lock, alongside Norm Hadley, the intimidating Canadian, who is no great technician.

In any case, Wasps have eschewed the set-pieces for much of this season and have every reason to do so again today. They will surely try to carry the battle to Bath from the start and if Bath respond in kind, as they have the capacity to do, the occasion may wipe away memories of the ill-tempered affair against Leicester last year. If ever Bath were vulnerable it is now — the trouble is, they may not see it that way.



William Fox-Pitt, riding Chaka, who won Burghley last year, leads after the dressage section of the Badminton Horse Trials. Report, page 44. Photograph: Julian Herbert

Tranmere youth tests positive

By JOHN GOODBODY

JAMIE HUGHES, 17, a YTS trainee with Tranmere Rovers, yesterday became the first English footballer to be charged with using a performance-enhancing drug.

However, Hughes has claimed that he is innocent, saying that the amphetamine stimulant may have been dropped into his drink without his knowledge, when he was in a night club.

The Football Association, already unsettled by the series of drug scandals this season, has not accepted Hughes'

explanation and has charged the player with bringing the game into disrepute.

Football has been damaged in recent months by the admission of Paul Merson, the Arsenal and England player, that he had taken cocaine and the discovery that Charlie Armstrong, the Crystal Palace forward, and two Charlton Athletic youngsters had also used recreational drugs.

Amphetamine, popularly known as "speed", is a social drug, which can also be used

as a stimulant. What makes the case curious is that the substance was found in a training ground sample and not in an actual match. Unless the player was trying to impress his club by using drugs to raise his training performances, then he would seem to have a strong case to be exonerated.

Frank Corrie, the Tranmere chairman, thinks the player is innocent. "We are totally convinced that there was no performance-enhancing intention," he said.

Carr and Ramprakash put Hampshire to sword

By PAT GIBSON



Carr in full bloom

LORD'S (second day of four): Middlesex, with seven second-innings wickets in hand, are 362 runs ahead of Hampshire

FOR all his phenomenal scoring feats last year, Brian Lara did not finish top of the first-class averages. That distinction went to John Carr and yesterday he provided a forceful reminder of how he surpassed the West Indian. He led Middlesex into a commanding position against Hampshire with a century that made a mockery of what had gone before.

Even Mark Ramprakash, who remained unbeaten on 128 and is in such form that he must have every chance of establishing himself in the

England side this summer, was overshadowed for a long time as Carr took his aggregate in his last five championship innings at Lord's to 668 at an average of 334.

Carr and Ramprakash put on 253 for the third wicket, and although they finished some way short of the county record, an undefeated 424 set by Edrich and Compton against Hampshire in 1948, there were shades of the Middlesex twins in their strokeplay — all on a pitch that claimed 16 wickets on the first day.

The effect of the soaring temperature changed the character of a surface on which Hampshire had finished 20 runs short of Middlesex's first innings 189. Presumably much of the moisture had gone, and Stephen-

son's figures told the tale: seven for 51 on Thursday, none for 67 yesterday.

The ball was still doing enough for Hampshire to be grateful for the 64 runs their last four wickets conjured up in the morning before Tufnell finished the innings with a spell of three for 11 in 19 balls. Middlesex were still not looking all that confident either when they lost their new openers, Gatting and Pooley, in successive overs.

They had put on 65 when Pooley was caught behind off Streak and Gatting bowled by a ball from Boviell, which seemed to keep low and nip back at him, so Hampshire must have felt that they were still in business.

Everything seems to be flowering earlier this year and

Carr is no exception. Last season he made 854 runs in his last seven innings at Lord's in which he was never dismissed. Already he seems to be back in full bloom.

While Ramprakash was content to discipline himself against the kind of carelessness that had cost him his wicket in the first innings, Carr was keen to seize the initiative, flowing from that ugly stance of his into a series of drives and pulls which took him to 50 off only 66 balls. It contained eight fours, the best of them cracked on the up through extra cover off Stephenson. He was to continue in that vein, hitting six more fours before pulling Connor into the Mound Stand to reach his century in 159 minutes off

132 balls. Ramprakash, meanwhile, was reaping the rewards of his vigilance. Now 25, he has matured remarkably in the past 12 months and there were times when he looked almost like a right-handed Lara as he punctuated majestic driving with full-blooded pulls. One of them, a six off Stephenson, took him to 50 off 98 balls and he faced only 71 more to reach his century which contained two sixes and 15 fours.

Hampshire, their suffering increased by the fact that Udall had to leave the field with gastro-enteritis, must have been wishing that their substitute, Malcolm Marshall, could have had a bowl when Connor stuck out a hand to take a return chance from Carr.

Hingis in semi-final for the first time

By OUR SPORTS STAFF

MARTINA HINGIS, of Switzerland, reached a senior semi-final for the first time in her tennis career yesterday, with a 7-6, 6-1 victory over Judith Wiesner, of Austria, at the Hamburg Open women's clay-court tournament.

Hingis, 14, held her nerve on the important points against the No 7 seed to move into a semi-final today with Anke Huber, of Germany, the No 5 seed, who advanced with a 3-6, 6-4, 6-2 victory over her compatriot, Petra Begerow.

Wiesner led Hingis 5-4 and served for the first set. She pulled ahead but Hingis battled back to gain a break chance and a tiring Wiesner double-faulted to tie the set at 5-5. Both held their service to go to a tie-break, and Hingis fell behind by losing her serve and a second point on Wiesner's. The two played to 4-4 before Hingis pulled ahead for good, taking the next three points to win.

Hingis's concentration is improving as she gains experience — she turned professional late last year — but the conqueror of the former Wimbledon finalist, Jana Novotna, in the second round is still learning to deal with the physical demands of top-class competition.

"I was still a bit tired from the Novotna match," Hingis said. "That is why I went for quick winners and that did not always go well." Hingis is restricted to 12 tournaments a year because of her age but she is eager to play more. "One month is not enough," she said.

Conchita Martinez, the Wimbledon champion, routed Jana Kandarr, of Germany, 6-1, 6-0. Martinez will face the winner of a match between Magdalena Maleeva, of Bulgaria, and Barbara Rittner, of Germany, in the semi-finals.

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The VE-Day ballyhoo offers a chance to pause and re-examine another war - that between cars and pedestrians

Cut the limit to stop giving people the hump

The VE-Day commemoration and the early life of rock guitarist Dave Stewart, who formed Eurythmics with Annie Lennox, do not at first sight offer much inspiration for a column about motoring, but there are many weird and wonderful routes from A to B.

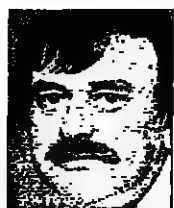
This week there has been a BBC film about Stewart and, of course, our screens have been filled with newsreels from 50 years ago.

It happens that Stewart, the peace that broke out in May 1945 and myself are of roughly the same vintage. The film made by Stewart's father of his son kicking a football around in a Sunderland street, and the film of VE street parties, have in common something that nobody under about 40 would consider significant: there is an almost complete absence of cars.

Stewart (and I) were able to run about in the streets where we lived with impunity. Today, every residential street in the land has cars parked nose to tail on both sides, posing a lethal hazard to children and anybody else trying to cross the road.

Yet along the carless vistas of 1945 the speed limit, brought in under the 1930 Road Traffic Act, was 30mph on all roads, amended in the 1934 Act to

DRIVEN TO DISTRACTION



Peter Barnard

apply to built-up areas only. Since then, there has been legislation in 1956 and 1965 which adjusted, towards, non-urban limits for trunk roads, dual carriageways and motorways.

The urban limit of 30mph has remained throughout the 61 years since 1934 in which the car has shifted from being an indulgence for the rich to a necessity for all. There is no other type of road on which the hazards have increased without the speed limit being reduced.

I am not generally in favour of speed limits unless they can be enforced but I think the present

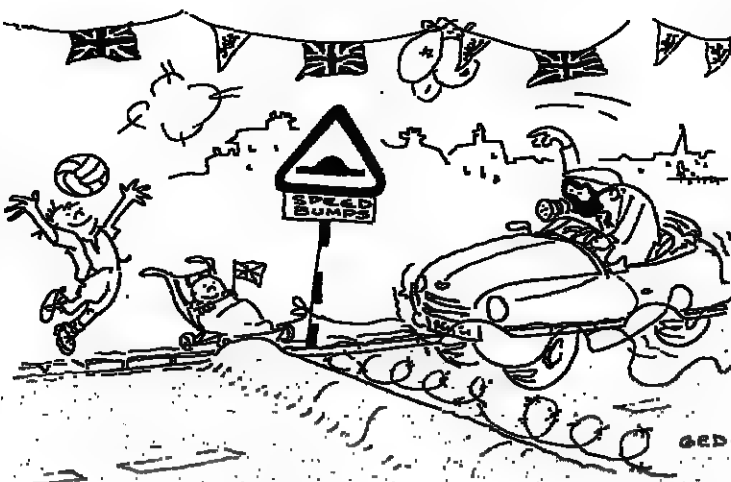
controversy about speed humps, especially among drivers of emergency service vehicles, could have been avoided or at least delayed if the introduction of these infuriating humps had been preceded by a reduction in the built-up area speed limit to 20mph.

This has been done on roads near schools, to considerable effect, and if the limit works near schools it would surely have a chance of working near homes. A bus driver was reported the other day as saying that he went over 100 humps during a four-hour shift, demonstrating that the hump has become the favourite, if not the only, quick fix among traffic managers.

There are still many more residential streets without humps than with them, raising the possibility of a sudden rush of blood among drivers spotting a flat path ahead, thus increasing the danger to pedestrians.

We need to re-examine the hump philosophy, and what better way to test it than by reducing the 30mph limit on roads scheduled to have humps in the near future, so that a direct comparison can be made.

Another thing drivers lacked in



1945 was flashing indicators. Then most cars had a little lever that stuck out sideways from the door pillar to indicate changes of direction but these were often invisible to following cars.

My father had to make various semaphore signals out of the window, his arm often looking after as if it had been through a washing machine sans the drier programme. Now it's easy. So why do so many

drivers not indicate? I have seen one accident in the past month caused directly by this idleness but it did not involve the car that turned left, right and left again in front of me without once using the indicator. I was sorely tempted to get alongside and give him a piece of my mind, but you never know what might happen when you start re-monstrating with a chap in a blue uniform driving a police car.

THE AA'S GRIDLOCK GUIDE

Tens of thousands of motorists will take to the roads this weekend for the May Bank Holiday break. In addition to VE-Day celebrations (main ones included below), many rallies and sports events could mean hold-ups across the country. Routes to the coast and to theme parks will also be busy.

LONDON

More than a million people are expected at events in the capital over the weekend, centred on Hyde Park, Marble Arch and Oxford Street.

Tomorrow, a service of celebration at St Paul's Cathedral at 11am will mean various road closures in the city, some from 6am. At 3pm, the Royal Family will attend events in Hyde Park. Various roads will be closed, including Park Lane both ways.

On Monday, Oxford Street will be closed between Portman St and New Bond St from 9am-3pm, for the Red Cross Birthday Celebrations. The Mall, Horseguards Road, Birdcage Walk and Constitution Hill will be closed for a display at Buckingham Palace at midday.

The VE Party starts in Hyde Park at 8pm and road closures are expected in the area 9.30-10.30pm.

SOUTHEAST

In Berkshire, a march through Newbury tomorrow will mean various road closures from 4.30pm-6pm. On Monday, the High St in Slough and both Denmark St and Market Place in Wokingham will be closed all day for VE-Day events.

In Oxfordshire, there will be a big all-day event at Blenheim Palace on Monday. The High St and Market St in Woodstock will be closed with heavy congestion expected on the A44 and A4096. The May Fair in Wantage will close off roads in the town centre until 8am tomorrow.

In Essex, a march in Colchester today will mean town centre road closures from 9.30am.

In Hampshire, the Portsmouth Lord Mayor's Show today combined with VE-Day celebrations includes a procession from noon.

SOUTHWEST

In Devon, The Hoe in Plymouth will be closed between Pier St and Madeira St from tomorrow until Tuesday for VE-Day celebrations. The

Great West Run takes place around Exeter city centre tomorrow and many roads will be closed between 8am and 3pm.

In Dorset, the Esplanade in Weymouth will be closed all day tomorrow for a street party.

In Cornwall, there will be road closures in Penzance town centre on Monday because of a street party.

MIDLANDS AND EAST ANGLIA

In Cambridgeshire, a VE-Day event at Duxford Imperial War Museum on Monday will affect traffic on the M11 and the A10.

In Suffolk, the Guinness race meeting at Newmarket will delay traffic on the A14, A11 and A1303, especially today and tomorrow.

In Leicestershire, the county show tomorrow and Monday will mean extra traffic on the A6 between Hathern and Loughborough.

In the West Midlands, Edgbaston in Birmingham will be busy tomorrow around midday because of a VE-Day parade and cricket at Warwickshire CCC.

NORTH

In Cheshire, Knutsford town centre will be closed off today 1pm-4pm for the annual Royal May Day procession. VE-Day celebrations will add to delays.

In Cumbria, the National Trust May Day celebrations at Fell Foot Country Park on Monday are expected to cause delays on the A592 near Newby Bridge.

In North Yorkshire, an exhibition is taking place at the Great Yorkshire Showground in Harrogate until Sunday.

In Leeds on Monday, a VE-Day march sets off at 1.15pm from Mill Street to the parish church.

On Merseyside, VE-Day celebrations in Kirby on Monday will affect The Promenade, Gynn Square and Starr Gate.

In Greater Manchester, VE-Day events in the Stockport area on Monday will affect several roads.

WALES

In Gwent, there are VE-Day celebrations on Monday in Newport at Tredegar House and Country Park. Delays from 11am.

In South Glamorgan, Prince Charles will attend a VE-Day service at Llandaff Cathedral in Cardiff at 11am on Monday.

Holiday highway robbery

Walter Ellis, once bitten, tells how to avoid the kind of Bank Holiday that can lead to bankruptcy

It had looked odd even from a distance, but close up, it was a sorry sight. Both rear wheels had been removed from my faithful little Orion and it was squatting on its axle, without even bricks to protect its dignity.

There we stood, the girlfriend and I, with our suitcases, suddenly bereft. It was a Bank Holiday

— so beware if misfortune befalls your car this weekend. I phoned the RAC. The control centre said the roads were littered with broken vehicles and it would be at least an hour before anybody could get to us.

An hour-and-a-half later a cheerful tow-truck driver appeared and said I had done the right thing to call the RAC. Otherwise, he said, it could cost an arm and a leg for it to be taken to the garage for repairs.

He fitted makeshift wheels, winched the car aboard and handed me a card with the phone number of his employers before driving off.

I phoned the garage several times, but not until 6pm — eight-and-a-half hours after my original call to the RAC — did I get any firm information. By then the job was done and the car awaited collection.

"How much do I owe you?" I asked, brandishing my credit card. "Five hundred and eighty six pounds," said the man behind the desk. "And we don't take credit cards."

I was incredulous. My car was six years old and only worth about £2,000. By this reckoning, the wheels alone made up half the value.

"But how can that be?"

"Alloy wheels. £112 each. Very expensive items. Then the tyres, the labour and the new wheel nuts. All adds up. I'm afraid. Plus the tow, of course. And VAT."

"The tow? How much was that?"

"£60. I'm afraid."

"But doesn't the RAC pay?"

"Fraid not. Private job, you see. All they did was call us and asked us if we could handle it."

You could have knocked me down with a dipstick. I felt as though two crimes had been committed against me that day, and the theft of my wheels wasn't necessarily the hardest to take. But what could I do? I paid by cheque and drove off, stunned.

Next day, back in London, I called the RAC for an explanation. The man from the legal help line said there was nothing to be done. Garages like



Back on the road: but two new wheels cost Walter Ellis a quarter of his car's value

this could charge what they liked. But it was the RAC which had called them in the first place. I said, And what about the sign on the garage doors? "Approved" garage. And what about all the other RAC jobs being done there the same day? The manager's desk was swamped in invoices from the New Knights of the

Road. Too bad, was the gist of his message. It was the luck of the draw.

In fact, once I had taken the matter further — through the RAC press office — something was done. My £60 tow charge was refunded and I was given an apology for the garage's failure to keep me informed. I still wanted an explanation, though. It ran like this: the garage was not an "approved" garage at all, but merely a contractor, employed when other facilities were unavailable.

Had I used one of the RAC's 990 registered garages, offering "selected", "selected plus" or "elite" services, I would have been assured of a written

estimate, customer-friendly reception facilities and close liaison, if necessary, with the RAC.

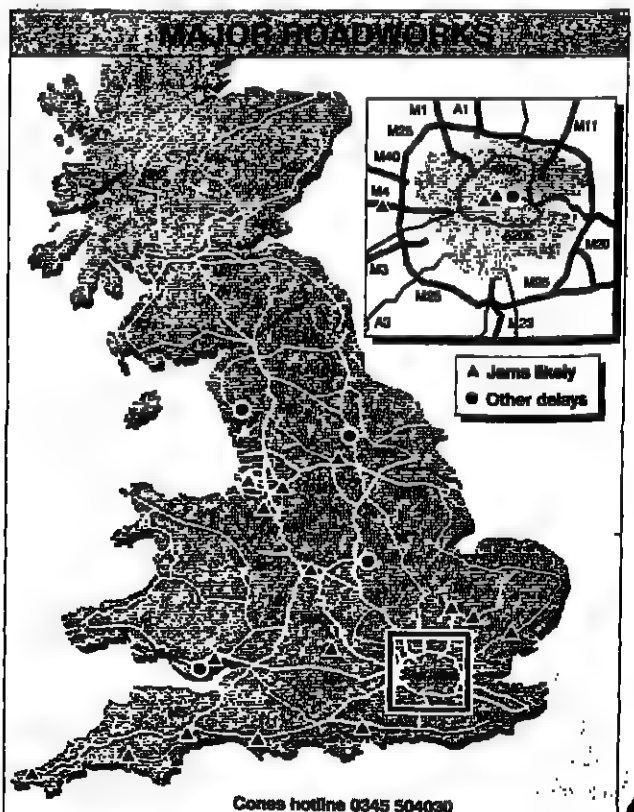
"Selected" garages have a bodyshop and approved, standardised equipment, and staff are fully-trained: "selected plus" garages guarantee the quality of their repairs and servicing, and "elite" garages provide showrooms of a recognised standard and deal only in vehicles open to inspection by RAC engineers.

I am happy to pass on this advice. But I still wonder how it is that the RAC can regularly use a garage of which it does not necessarily approve and over which it has no control. At the very least, if the organisation is going to derogate from best practice due to pressure of business, it should say so in advance. Forewarned is forearmed.

So what about the opposition? The AA operates its own "appointed" and "approved" schemes. It has 1,500 appointed garages up and down the country, offering high-grade repairs and servicing, each of which is expected to provide comfortable reception facilities and written estimates for work. "Approved" garages are mainly larger, quick replacement facilities, such as Kwikfit and Autoglass, with advertised prices and a guaranteed quality of service.

Mike Vening, head of garage appointments at the AA, says garages which do not measure up to its standards are "first warned, then scratched from the list. "We give only one-year, renewable approvals," he adds, "and these can be withdrawn at any time."

Both motoring organisations pursue excellence, and most of the time they provide first-class value for money. Be warned, though. Next time you call the RAC or the AA, make sure what they are offering you is the best service available, and not just the nearest to hand, no matter how busy they are. Get an estimate, agree a price, and if you are not satisfied, phone the organisation responsible. As American Express used to say, membership has its privileges.



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'The Jaguar XK120 is one of the most beautiful sports cars ever designed and an all-time classic'

The big cat that roared to victory

Lord Montagu of Beaulieu continues his series on a dozen cars that made Britain great

Few makes of car have been so much the work of one man as Jaguar. Long before the name was coined, William Lyons was making his mark with stylish bodies on other people's chassis. Born in Blackpool in 1901, Lyons started in business at the age of 20, making motorcycle sidecars with his friend William Walmsley.

They called their firm the Swallow Sidecar Company and, in 1927, added coachwork to their activities. In 1928 they moved to Coventry, to be closer to the motor industry. The chassis they built on included Austin Seven, Standard, Fiat and Swift.

In 1931, Lyons designed a more individual car, which he called the SS1. This still used a Standard Sixteen engine but it was installed in an understung frame and clothed with a rakish coupé body, which led one newspaper to call it "a £1,000 dream car for £310".

Lyons had shown his inimitable flair for combining stylish looks with outstanding value; performance would come later. The 1935 London Motor Show saw his first four-door saloon, the first car to bear the name Jaguar. The engine was still a Standard, but modified by his chief engineer Harry Weslake.

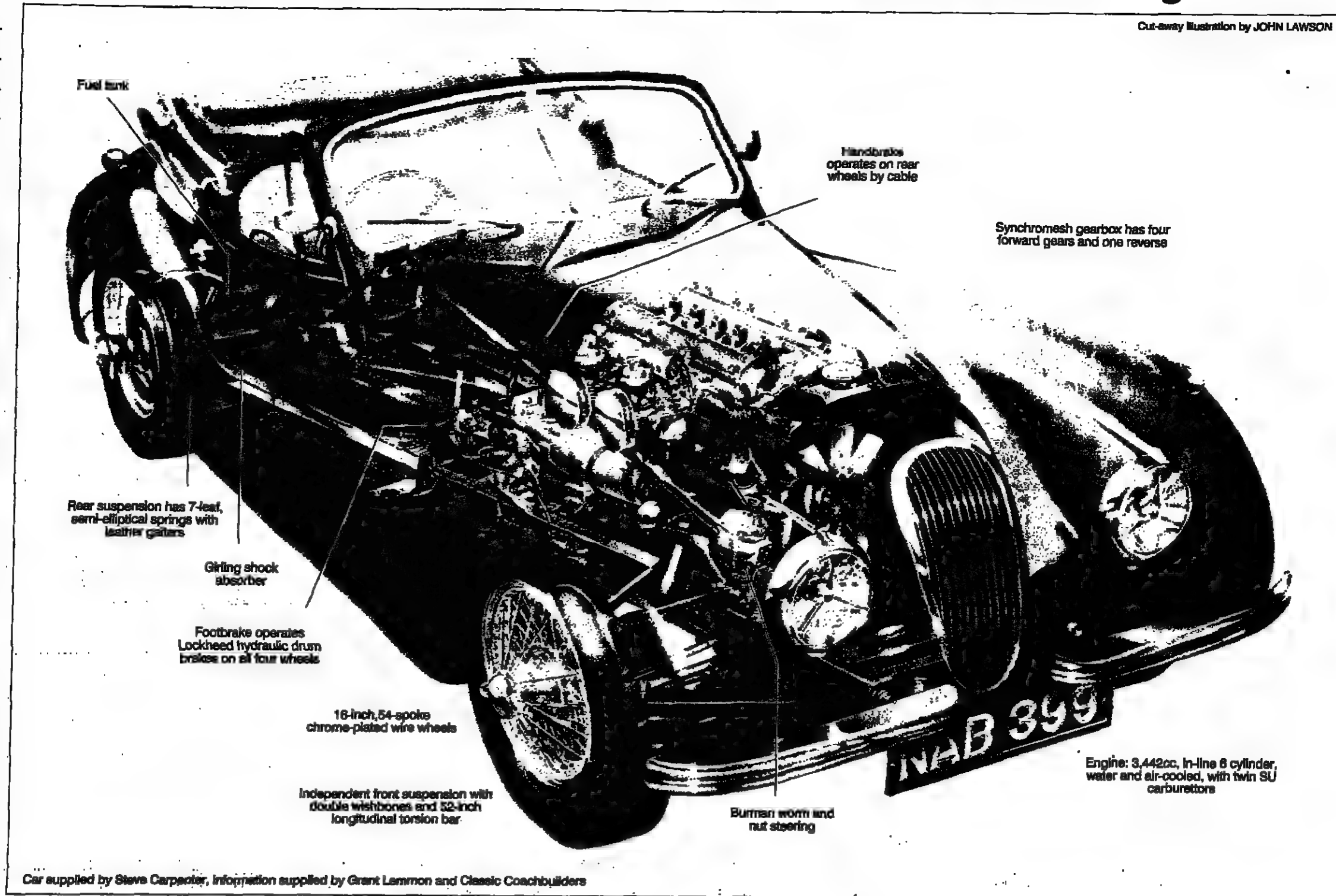
The body matched the Bentley or Lagonda for elegance, but the price was a modest £385. It was known as the SS Jaguar, and by the outbreak of war nearly 14,400 had been made with three engine sizes.

It was not until after the war that Lyons changed the name of his company. The letters SS had acquired an unacceptable association with the Nazis, and in March 1945, Jaguar Cars Ltd was born.

Another important decision was to move engine building from the Standard factory to Jaguar's own. This gave it the freedom to develop a new engine.

As before, Weslake was in charge of cylinder head design, but the new engine was much more ambitious than that in the SS Jaguar. It had hemispherical combustion chambers and twin overhead camshafts, a layout previously found mostly in highly expensive sports cars.

As well as the advanced head, it had a massively strong steel crankshaft. Lyons intended the engine for a luxury saloon to replace the pre-war designs, but before launching into large-scale manufacture he wanted to test the engine. Two sizes were built, the four-cylinder 2-litre XK100 and the six-cylinder 3.5-



Car supplied by Steve Carpenter, information supplied by Grant Lammon and Classic Coachbuilders



A touch of class: the stylish interior of the mould-breaking yet inexpensive XK120

litre XK120. The former never went into production. The six was shown at London's first post-war motor show, at Earls Court in October 1948.

The 160bhp engine was impressive enough on its own, but the chassis was clothed in

a striking two-seater body quite unlike anything seen from Jaguar before. The wing line flowed into the doors, the narrow radiator grille was flanked by twin bumpers which did not meet in the middle, and the rear wheels

were enclosed by spats, which added to the car's elegance.

As always, Lyons quoted a modest price for his new sports car — £1,263, including Purchase Tax. This was less than half the cost of a 2-litre Ferrari 166, which was a less

tractable car. Before the XK120 went into production, Lyons envisaged a limited run of 200 cars, simply to test the engine before putting it into his saloon. However, demand was so great that production continued until 1954, by which time 12,078 had been made. The first 200 cars had aluminium bodies, the rest steel.

Most went for export, particularly to America, where they were sold by the ebullient German-born Max Hoffmann. He claimed to have taken 80 orders on the evidence of the catalogue alone. No cars were delivered until July 1949, and the first was not released to the house market until March 1950. In fact, of the 7,713 XK120s made between 1950 and 1953, only 571, or 8 per cent, were sold in the UK.

The name XK120 implied a top speed of 120mph, and for once this was no exaggeration. The example tested by *The Motor* reached 123.5mph, and another achieved a flying mile at 132.596mph. The same car

was then driven past spectators at 100mph in top gear.

The XK's first competition success was a 1-2 victory in the 1949 Production Car Race at Silverstone. The following year, 21-year-old Stirling Moss won the Tourist Trophy race, and Ian Appleyard took a *Coupe des Alpes* and made best individual performance in the International Alpine Rally.

Two more *Coupe des Alpes* in 1951 and 1952 earned Appleyard the first ever Alpine Gold Cup. From 1951 he was partnered by his wife Patricia, Lyons's daughter, and his car, NUB 120, was displayed at the National Motor Museum for many years.

The competition version, known at first as the XK120C, but generally as the C-type, made its debut in 1951. This had a spaceframe chassis and an engine tuned to give 204bhp. This naturally took the lead in competition, winning at Le Mans in 1951 and 1953 among many other suc-

cesses, so the XK120 was no longer seen in big races. However, it continued to compete in rallies and club racing on both sides of the Atlantic, until the late 1950s.

The original two-seater roadster was joined by a fixed-head coupé in 1951 and a drop-head coupé in 1953. The next XK, the 140, arrived in 1955, followed two years later by the XK150, which kept the line going until the arrival of the E-type in 1961. Though totally new in appearance, this used an enlarged version of the XK engine, as did the saloons, Marks VII through to X, and the later XJ6 made up to 1986.

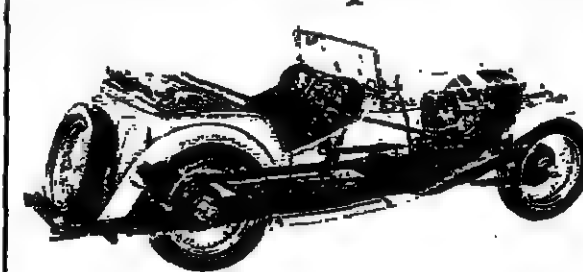
The last car to use the XK

engine was the Daimler Vanden Plas limousine, made until 1992, while the unit was also used in Dennis ambulances, Daimler armoured cars and racing hydroplanes.

Despite the better performance and superior brakes of the later XKs and E-type, the original XK120 cannot be beaten for style and remains a highly sought after collector's car. Expect to pay £50-60,000 for a good example today.

To me, this masterpiece by Lyons is one of the most beautiful sports cars ever designed; it must surely go down as the classic of all time and an everlasting credit to the British motor industry.

THE TIMES Historic car print offer



Readers may buy prints of John Lawson's cut-away illustrations of the 1946 MG TC Midget (above) and the Jaguar XK 120 also pictured on this page.

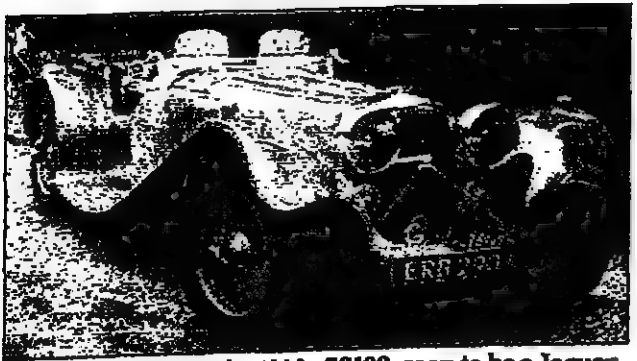
The prints are available in two forms:
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Six racy decades of the sleek streetcar named desire



The last Swallow: the 1930s SS100, soon to be a Jaguar



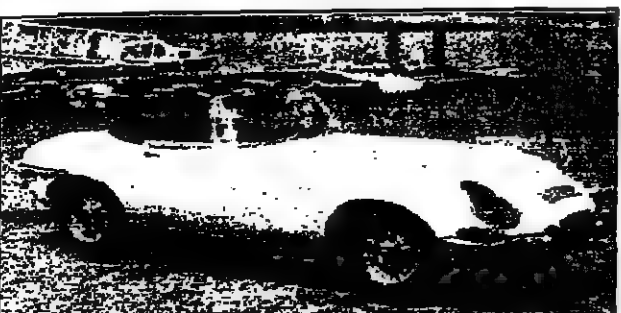
Victory for the C-type at the 24-hour Le Mans in 1951



Bestseller: the MkII was a 1960s B-movie favourite

If you want to be a purist about it, this weekend's celebration of Jaguar's Diamond Jubilee is four months early, for it was not until September 1935 that William Lyons decided to swap Swallows for Jaguars (Kevin Eason writes).

That is unlikely to dim enthusiasm for the 80 glorious cars, from Lyons's earliest SS Jaguar saloon up to the sleek XK120 — the first production car to break the 200mph barrier — which go on show this weekend at the Top Gear Classic and Sportscar Show at Birmingham's National Exhibition Centre. One hall of the NEC will be devoted entirely to the road and race cars to the road and race cars which captured the public imagination, all of which bore Lyons's unmistakable stamp. They were always sleek, always powerful... and always desirable.



The definitive Jaguar sports car, the 150mph E-type



Soon to give way to a new model, the 20-year-old XJS

The Jaguar legend was born on the racetracks: it was the first marque to win both the Le Mans 24-hour endurance race and the Monte Carlo Rally in the same year. There were five Le Mans victories in the 1950s and road cars that still make enthusiasts drool.

Lyons always made value-for-money cars. Though luxurious, they were never overpriced. Then there were

models such as the E-type, a definitive British sports car which looks as glamorous today as at its launch more than three decades ago, and which inspired Ferrari to build the 250 GT.

Lyons — by then Sir William — retired in 1969, and Jaguar became part of the huge British Leyland conglomerate, later BL. By the end of the 1970s, BL was state-owned,

loss-making and being carved up by Sir Michael Edwards. His cuts saw the end of Morris and Triumph — and Jaguar was close to bankruptcy.

Edwards recruited John Egan, who had to dodge a picket line outside the Browns Lane factory in Coventry on his first day as Jaguar's chairman. Egan transformed the business, the cars becoming more reliable and Jaguars

taking to the racetrack again with a series of stunning victories at Le Mans in the 1980s.

Egan was also a great salesman, and the sales figures grew year by year. His reward was the privatisation of Jaguar in 1984, a showpiece of the Thatcher revitalisation programme and an act Sir William witnessed before his death a year later.

However, the soaring sales masked Jaguar's lack of financial muscle in a world of multinationals. Egan, now Sir John, sold Jaguar to Ford for £1.5 billion, only five years after it was privatised for just £300 million.

Today, after a tricky patch during the recession, Jaguar is booming again. Sales are up and production could bounce back to 40,000 this year. The cars are graceful and sleek again, like the new XJ6 saloons voted the world's most beautiful car.

Yet even Sir William would not have visualised what comes next. Jaguar is to build a new smaller car, probably in Britain, and at a rate of 100,000 a year, putting these Small Cats within reach of buyers on budget prices, much like the Jaguars of the past. Lyons would have roared approval.

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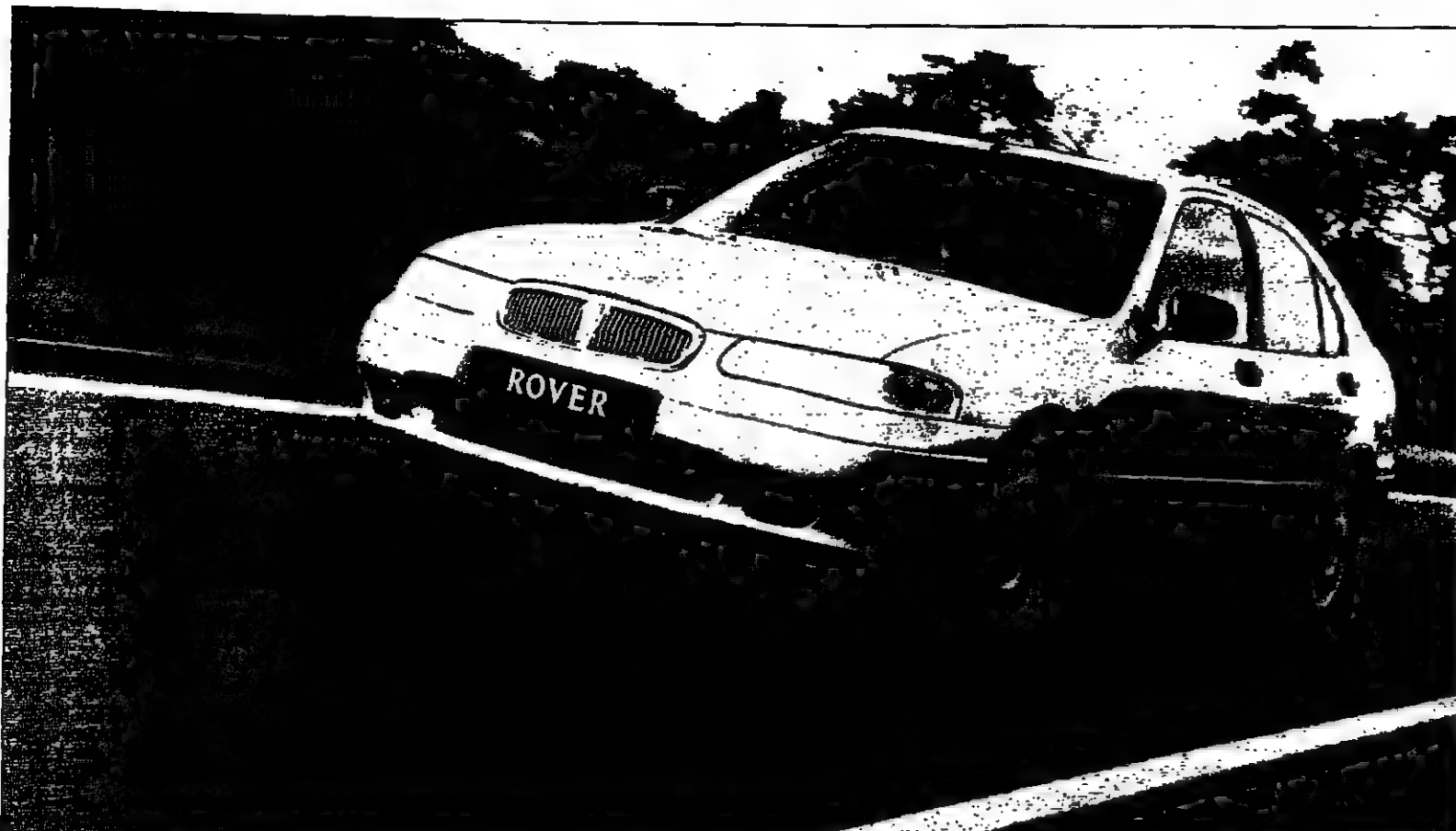
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CARS ON SHOW AT BEAULIEU

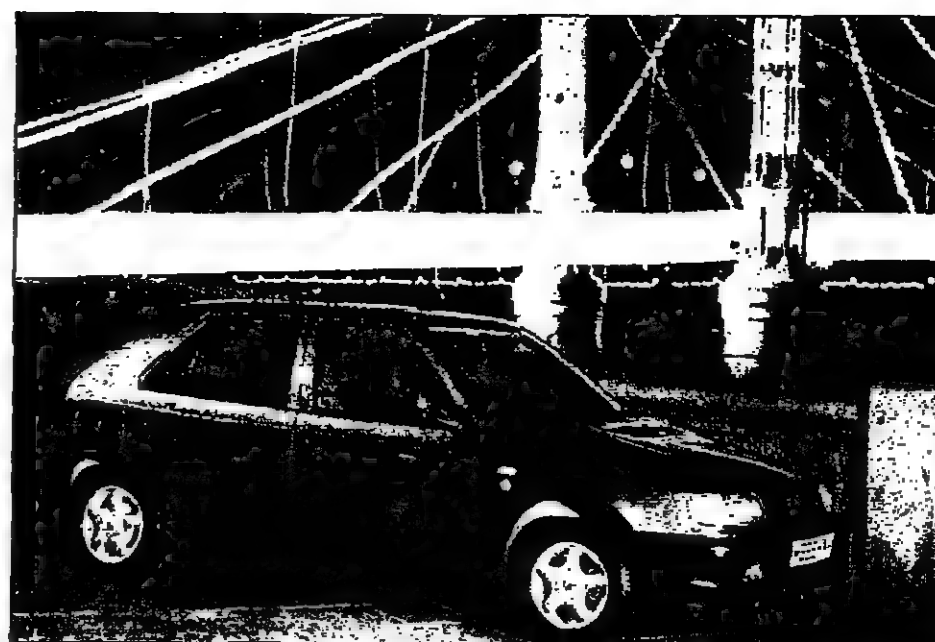
An exhibition of all 12 cars featured by Lord Montagu and sponsored by Car 95 is running until the end of September at the National Motor Museum at Beaulieu. The museum is also hosting a two-day spring classic auto jumble on May 13 and 14. For further details call 01590 612345.

TIMES ROAD TESTS: Kevin Eason on a Rover with bite; Helen Mound on a Skoda to take seriously

Old losers turn natural born winners



Better by design: the Birmingham-built Rover 400, possibly the most attractive car in its class, offers excellent ride quality and performance



Top of the range: but even with added extras, the Felicia GLXi is priced at just £7,699

In the past Rover executives would have been watching over their shoulders for the flash of knives when they launched a new car. Too many still carry the scars from the years when the old British Leyland used to send a new model into the marketplace more in hope than confidence.

What a change, then, to see chairman John Towers and his team positively beaming as drivers bustled past to get a look at the company's latest offering. The days of "make-or-buy" models have gone; the Rover 400 will be a "make-and-make" car for the company.

The 400 was launched this week into the most competitive sector of the market, the upper medium segment which accounts for sales of 400,000 new cars annually, close to a quarter of all registrations. The sector is packed with the biggest players, from the British-built Ford Escort, Vauxhall Astra, Peugeot 306 and Honda Civic, to foreign competition from the Citroën ZX, Volkswagen's Golf and even BMW's new £13,500 "baby", the Compact.

That means the 400 has to be good if it is to stand a chance. And it is good. Very good indeed.

In fact, the Rover 400 is a revelation. The car is good looking, possibly the most attractive in its class, while the interiors are the usual combination of plush fittings and lots of veneer. However, we

almost expect that from a Rover design department which sends out models to catch the eye with increasing regularity.

The revelation is in the ride and performance which, for once, surpasses the car's twin made by Honda. The 400 is the last model to be designed in collaboration with Honda, the Japanese company producing the Civic at Swindon, Wiltshire, while the Rover comes from Longbridge in Birmingham.

The cars could hardly be more dissimilar. Where the Honda engines are high-revving and "buzzy", Rover's K-series power packs feel more relaxed yet more powerful. Where the Honda, and just about every other car in this class, bounces and jolts over potholes and ridges, the Rover 400 smooths out bumps better than the heavy roller at Lord's.

The ride and handling package has been designed using techniques developed by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (Nasa) in America to measure refinement and comfort, so no unpleasant shake, rattle and roll transforms the passenger cabin into a quivering tin box. It clearly works for I could detect none of the appalling jerkiness that so often haunts a car of this size.

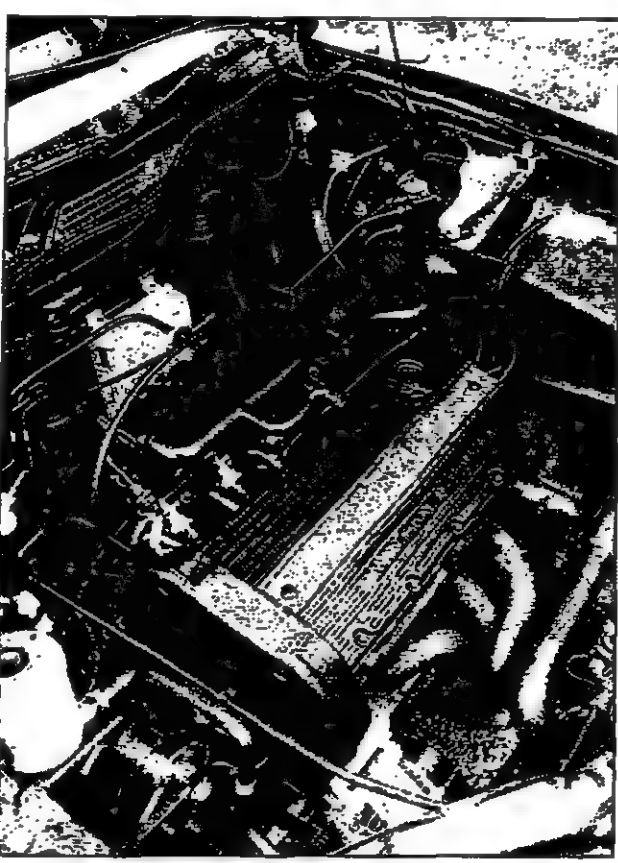
Instead, the 400 stayed unerringly on line, with even heavy potholes swallowed and digested as though they were not there. Added to that important

virtue, the Rover's all-round competence is extremely impressive. I hurriedly tried the 1.4 and 1.6-litre versions around country lanes and found plenty of acceleration in both cars and confidence as the short nose turned into bends. This was a car zipping along like some of its bigger sisters but without effort, raucousness or the sheer discomfort so many small cars offer.

As the only car in the range which comes with a Honda engine and transmission, the only version I did not like was the 1.6-litre automatic. The contrast between the deeper, throatier Longbridge engines and the Honda's whizzing 1.6 was startling and I preferred the British-designed power pack.

When the car is spinning nicely you can appreciate the little touches, such as the three-spoke steering wheel, clear dashboard dials and all-round vision through deep windows, which is excellent. The 400's interior is as roomy and welcoming as anything on the market, big or small.

John Russell, Rover's managing director, says the 400 carries on the line of design and performance established by its bigger sister, the 600, but will help make a breakthrough into a pool of younger buyers wanting performance allied to luxury. If he is right, Rover is geared up to making 200,000 of the 400 series annually.



Punchy power pack: the impressive K-series engine

FACTS AND FIGURES
Engine: 4-cylinder, K-Series in 1.4 and 1.6-litre forms; Transmission: Five-speed manual or automatic with Honda engine; Performance: for 416i, top speed 115mph; 0-60mph in 10.3 secs; Fuel consumption: 35.5 mpg; Price: £12,995 for 416i; Insurance group: 10.

Heard the one about the German corporation that bought the Czech carmaker which produced tired old hatchbacks, normally the brunt of even wearier old jokes?

After a large injection of cash and a crash course in modern car production, Volkswagen helped Skoda come up with the punchline: the Skoda Felicia — a thorough overhaul of the company's existing Favorit model. There is, though, nothing funny about this five-door hatchback.

Under communism Skoda had a miserable time, because the authorities and a struggling economy made the rules. The company's designers and engineers knew what was wrong with the cars but could not afford — or were not allowed — to put them right. Now, thanks to Volkswagen finance, that can change.

The jibes traditionally aimed at the cash-starved products are no longer relevant. Although based on the five-year-old Favorit, the Felicia is substantially removed from previous efforts.

The new car has lost the angular look of the Favorit; there is a family resemblance that harks back to the days when the Czech government insisted the windcreens were not steeply raked — in case they looked too decadently sporty — but the overall appearance is far more in keeping with modern competition.

In particular, the panels and paintwork are improvements Skoda should be proud of. Unlike the Favorit, the sheet metal of the Felicia's doors and bonnet fit flush with the bodywork and the paint is neat and even.

The styling has changed sufficiently to disguise the new car's much-maligned roots: in a test with 300 drivers, only six

FACTS AND FIGURES
Engine: 4-cylinder, 1.3-litre giving 54bhp or 68bhp; Transmission: Five-speed manual; Performance: for 54bhp model, top speed 90mph, 0-60mph in 17 seconds; Fuel consumption: urban cycle, 34mpg; Price from £5,999; Insurance group: 4.

recognised it as a Skoda — away from test conditions that's no problem, since the Felicia is the first model to wear the new hideously-over-sized Skoda badge on its nose.

Some say the badge is a mistake, since the Skoda image is probably the car's biggest handicap. However, the company is spending £5 million this year on a marketing campaign designed to pull its image into the 1990s. Lines such as: "Before we changed the car, we changed the company," and "We changed the car, can you change your mind?" are designed to alter preconceptions and draw customers' attention to Volkswagen's involvement.

The greatest steps towards a modern Skoda are inside the Felicia, where everything is bolted together firmly; the seats are genuinely comfortable, the switchgear solid, the instruments clear. There are none of the rattles and squeaks so typical of the old car, and the feeling that it's all about to fall apart in your hands has gone.

Skoda has splashed out on a stereo, sunroof and central locking for the top GLXi Felicia, but its £7,699 price tag doesn't stretch to electric windows. Skip all the comforts — except a five-speed gearbox — and the basic LXI price is £5,999. All models are fitted with an immobiliser, and airbags and anti-lock brakes are expected next year.

Pricing is what attracts customers to a Skoda showroom: last year, only 22 per cent chose the Favorit for its style, while almost half said they bought a Skoda because of value for money and more than 40 per cent were originally considering buying a second-hand car. Whatever the reason, the company expects to sell 8,000 Felicias this year, as well as the 6,000 Favorits still lying about.

Driving the new Skoda is a surprisingly pleasant experience: it steers as soon as you turn the wheel, unlike the Favorit, which just leans in the general direction you're aiming for. The revamped suspension is hard over poor road surfaces, but a great improvement over the soggy settings on the old car.

The 1.3-litre engine — available in 54bhp and 68bhp versions — is surprisingly quiet; even at motorway speeds it cruises peacefully. Volkswagen 1.6 petrol and 1.9 diesel engines will be fitted in the Felicia later this year. However, for now there's just the one engine with two power outputs and three trim levels: LXI, LXI Plus and GLXi.

It's remarkable what 60 million marks (£27 million) can do to transform a dodgy old hatchback into a quality family car like the Felicia, and Volkswagen can take credit for that. The Czechs, however, take credit for 95 per cent of the engineering work, proving that with enough cash Skoda does know how to get it right.

Win the new Rover MGF

THE TIMES Win an MGF

TOKEN SEVEN

Since it was first shown at the Geneva Motor Show in March, more than 500 orders have been placed for Rover's new MGF. The Times, in association with Rover Group, is offering readers a chance to beat the queue by winning one of the first cars off the production line.

Collect six of the MGF tokens appearing in The Times every day and attach them to the application form below. You may send in as many entries as you wish, but each must be on an official form, accompanied by six tokens.

The competition closes on May 27. Normal Times Newspaper rules apply. For further information on the MGF range please call 01645 251 251.

OFFICIAL APPLICATION FORM

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WHICH ROVER ARE YOU INTERESTED IN? 800 / 600 / 400 / 200 / 100 / Mini / MGF

Please tick box if you do not wish to receive further mailings ☐

From The Times or Rover Group

Can you drive off in style?

AN EXPENSES-PAID two-week touring holiday for two in Europe with a car provided and £500 spending money awaits the winner of our search for the Company Car Driver of 1995.

There are still ten days for companies to enter this contest, which is dedicated to improving the skills and training of the thousands of fleet drivers in Britain. The winning company will get free training for a dozen of its drivers.

If you want to join this contest sponsored by The Times and Lease Plan — with more than 40,000 cars under its wing, Britain's leading fleet management company — all you have to do is gather a team of three drivers from your company and persuade your own fleet manager to fill in the adjacent form.

There will be six regional heats and we are looking for 120 teams to take part along with their fleet managers. Each driver will face a series of tests, including a practical driving demonstration in one of the £15,000 Primera 2.0 SLX cars that Nissan is providing for the contest.

They will have to demonstrate their skill on both road and track to examiners from Drive Tech, one of Britain's leading driver-training schools. Fleet managers will also be tested on their knowledge of roadcraft and driving safety.

Teams will be selected by way of a surprise telephone quiz, which will test their knowledge of the Highway



Code: The winners will go through to the final at the Silverstone Driving Centre under the critical gaze of John Watson, the former Formula One driver.

The centre trains more than 10,000 drivers a year. Watson shows how the expertise he demonstrated on the track with the McLaren team can be applied to road conditions. His belief is that if drivers enjoy their time at the wheel, they are more likely to practice safe-driving techniques.

LAST YEAR more than 250 drivers from 70 organisations, ranging from a team of district nurses to teams from multinational companies, entered the contest.

Chris Howell, the founder of Drive Tech, said of that contest: "Standards were encouragingly high and they were obviously keen to improve their skills. Certainly the finalists were of a very high standard."

The intention of this year's contest is to exceed those standards. But if you enjoy driving then what better prize could there be than two weeks of freedom on the roads?

THE TIMES LEASE PLAN COMPANY CAR DRIVER 1995

Company

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Entrant

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Nature of Business

No of employees

No of company cars

Nominated drivers

Surname Age

Forename(s)

Job title

How long employed yrs Points on licence

Surname Age

Forename(s)

Job title

How long employed yrs Points on licence

Please select one first and one second choice for the location and date of your team's regional heat (indicate your selection by placing a 1 or 2 within box):

Oxford, (Moat House), 8th June ☐ Ware, Hertfordshire, (Briggs House Hotel) 12th July ☐

Nottingham, (Moat House), 14th June ☐ Glasgow, (Moat House International), 22nd June ☐

Hereford, (Moat House), 28th June ☐ Blackburn, (Moat House), 4th July ☐

Please ensure that you and your nominated drivers are available on both your first and second choice and for the final at Silverstone on Friday, 11th August. Initial qualification will be by telephone questionnaire. Entrants and drivers will be contacted on an individual basis.

Send completed entries by 17 May, 1995 to: The Times - Lease Plan Company Car Driver 1995, Leedex PR, 52-54 Broadwick Street, London W1V 1FF

COMPETITION RULES

The closing date for entries is 17 May 1995. Drivers must be over 24 years of age to enter. Maximum number of endorsements on any competitor's driving licence is three points. Drivers must bring their current driving licence to their regional heat for examination of the above. Drivers must be nominated by the director or senior manager responsible for the company car fleet. Drivers must be nominated in groups of three. Companies can only enter one team to compete. The entrant may nominate him/herself as part of the team. Competitors must drive a company car or vehicle as part of their employment or remuneration package. Qualification for the team/company award will be dependent on a written test, to be completed by the entrant at their team's regional heat. Employees of Lease Plan, Drive Tech, Nissan, News International and the British Gas Group are not permitted to enter. In the spirit of the event, specialists organisations such as driver training schools, police, the armed forces and the fire may not be permitted to enter. A place in the regional heats will be confirmed by post, at least ten days prior to the heat. In the event of over-subscription, qualification to the regional heats will be judged through a driver telephone questionnaire. If the team does not qualify for the regional heat, the entrant will be informed in writing prior to the first heat and the team will be placed on a reserve list. Feedback on each driver's performance will be available after the competition. The reserve driver will be called upon at the regional heat should one of the first three drivers be unable to compete. In the event of a finalist not being able to attend, the next highest scoring driver from that regional heat will be invited to attend in their place. The prize for the winner will be a seven day European motorway holiday for two. The team/company prize will be a driver programme for twelve employees. Cash alternatives are not available. The judge's decision is final.

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121	290,985	323	1996 2.4 Auto turbo, esp. ctrl., 4 dr, 80 mpg	567	290,985
122	293,985	324	1996 2.4 Auto turbo, esp. ctrl., 4 dr, 80 mpg	577	293,985
123	296,985	325	1996 2.4 Auto turbo, esp. ctrl., 4 dr, 80 mpg	587	296,985
124	299,985	326	1996 2.4 Auto turbo, esp. ctrl., 4 dr, 80 mpg	597	299,985
125	302,985	327	1996 2.4 Auto turbo, esp. ctrl., 4 dr, 80 mpg	607	302,985
126	305,985	328	1996 2.4 Auto turbo, esp. ctrl., 4 dr, 80 mpg	617	305,985
127	308,985	329	1996 2.4 Auto turbo, esp. ctrl., 4 dr, 80 mpg	627	308,985
128	311,985	330	1996 2.4 Auto turbo, esp. ctrl., 4 dr, 80 mpg	637	311,985
129	314,985	331	1996 2.4 Auto turbo, esp. ctrl., 4 dr, 80 mpg	647	314,985
130	317,985	332	1996 2.4 Auto turbo, esp. ctrl., 4 dr, 80 mpg	657	317,985
131	320,985	333	1996 2.4 Auto turbo, esp. ctrl., 4 dr, 80 mpg	667	320,985
132	323,985	334	1996 2.4 Auto turbo, esp. ctrl., 4 dr, 80 mpg	677	323,985
133	326,985	335	1996 2.4 Auto turbo, esp. ctrl., 4 dr, 80 mpg	687	326,985
134	329,985	336	1996 2.4 Auto turbo, esp. ctrl., 4 dr, 80 mpg	697	329,985
135	332,985	337	1996 2.4 Auto turbo, esp. ctrl., 4 dr, 80 mpg	707	332,985
136	335,985	338	1996 2.4 Auto turbo, esp. ctrl., 4 dr, 80 mpg	717	335,985
137	338,985	339	1996 2.4 Auto turbo, esp. ctrl., 4 dr, 80 mpg	727	338,985
138	341,985	340	1996 2.4 Auto turbo, esp. ctrl., 4 dr, 80 mpg	737	341,985
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141	350,985	343	1996 2.4 Auto turbo, esp. ctrl., 4 dr, 80 mpg	767	350,985
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Just sitting behind the wheel of a Ferrari F355 Spyder made Kevin Eason want to own one

A Spyder weaving pure magic

To lose one Ferrari is a misfortune but to lose two within 12 hours could be described as careless.

Antonio Ghini cupped his chin in his hands and contemplated the odds on the cars of both the company's Formula One race drivers being stolen — cars loaned to Gerhard Berger and Jean Alesi to attend the San Marino Grand Prix last weekend.

Berger parked his F355 Berlinetta outside his hotel and returned to find an empty length of tarmac; next morning, Jean Alesi awoke to find his 512M gone. Cars worth £220,000, lost forever.

Ferrari had its new F355 Spyder on show in Monaco — the last of five new models from the famous Maranello factory in just two years — and Ghini, Ferrari's communications director, shepherded his four new babies as though his

very life depended on it. Losing such a glorious object of motoring creation to thieves whose only objective would be to strip it down into boxes of valuable components does not bear thinking about. Just sitting at the wheel made me want one... now. Not because the Spyder is expensive, not because it is some sort of status symbol but because it is simply the best.

Like owning a Picasso or listening to Mozart, driving a Ferrari is not an activity, it is an act of passion. The heart of any motorist, no matter how cynical after long hours in British traffic jams, would skip a beat at the wheel because the experience is so remote from workaday driving. There is a naughtiness, a feeling of restrained power that might at first be daunting but is remarkably easy to control, even when crawling in second gear in a line of traffic.



The Ferrari F355 Spyder has 380 horse power waiting to be unleashed — on the track or in the centre of London

The Spyder has 380 horse power waiting to be unleashed, but as Ghini says: "If you have 380 horse power and that means you have to drive like crazy, then there is no point to the car. The 355 is two cars in one, a car you can drive on the track but also a car you could drive in the centre of London quite easily."

Hearing that philosophy from a Ferrari executive is a revelation. Time was when Ferraris were cars with a racing pedigree that just happened to be translated into road models. If you could not drive it, it was your own fault. The Spyder, though, is a sign that Maranello has emerged from a period of huge

change. Boom — when Ferrari sold a record 4,200 cars in 1991 — was followed by the crash in 1993 when sales dropped to 2,350. Luca di Montezemolo, the new and youthful president, killed off any notions that Ferrari was a mass manufacturer and has pinned maximum annual production to 3,000 cars a year. That means you might have to wait 18 months for your Spyder, even if you order one now. But you will really want it.

And Ferrari wants its cars to be driven. Stuart Robinson, managing director of Ferrari UK, reckons there are more than 3,800 Ferraris registered for daily use in Britain. Vital statistics: a 3.5-litre, 40-

valve V8 mounted midships which fires the car to 62mph in 4.7 seconds and on to a top speed of 185mph, with twin airbrakes, anti-lock brakes and electronically controlled suspension for a "soft" ride around town.

The numbers, though, do not tell the story. What does it feel like to drive a Spyder? Answer: glorious. The turn of the ignition unleashes the V8, each blip of the throttle encouraging a gurgle then a roar so musical that it gives as much pleasure as listening to the stereo (which is just as well because there isn't one fitted).

The Spyder is the convertible version of the F355, using an electrical hood mechanism

derived from the Mercedes SL. Where the Merc is antiseptic, the Ferrari is seductive. The interior is a right fit even for the vertically challenged and although would-be owners will pay \$89,000, there are no electric seat controls. But that is a frill in a car engineered this well because this is the motoring equivalent of slipping on a glove.

You feel connected to the car in a way which sharpens your responses, although the throttle is not nervous and can be dipped as easily as the accelerator pedal on a Mondeo.

The Spyder is a simply wonderful car and I would keep it under lock, key and chain.

Indian posse in mountain rescue job

In the second of his special reports on the 25th anniversary London-Mexico Rally, Roy Dixon, co-driving Tony Fall in a Volvo 142S, reports from La Paz in the high Andes on week two of the 30-day race.

A rest day at last, which has come as a welcome relief to all the competitors, officials, and the AA mechanics. The race has been tough so far: not only the stages but also the transport sections.

The journey through South America has been dramatic. We have covered 625 miles of straight monotonous roads over flat pampas, and "wash-board" surface gravel in the mountains, where high speeds were necessary to eliminate vibration. All cars found a "frequency resonance" at which vibration was eliminated, which in turn meant we were catching each other up and having to travel in unbelievable dust storms.

Tony Fall and I have been making steady progress — notwith-

All our wheels were changed in seven minutes, to the relief of driver and co-driver.

Peter Woodward and Robert Norrington, in their Austin 1800, were about three miles from the Argentine-Bolivian border and cruising comfortably on time, when three llamas idled across their path. They blew their air-horn, but the llamas seemed not to know what to do and they had to brake violently. As Woodward swerved to miss them, they jumped back into his path again, and he went into a hole, wrecking the Austin's front suspension and radiator. However, they are back in the rally with six hours penalties, and the llamas, untouched, continue their quiet lives.

Freddie Freston and George Hampson report that their quest to take Paddington Bear to Peru to meet Aunt Lucy is well on course. They also have with them the experienced koala bear "Ponnie", a veteran of the London-Sydney rally, who apparently has enjoyed Paddington Bear's company no end.



standing our unending search for shock absorbing bushes — but we could have been eliminated on three occasions, when the organisers changed the start times in Paraguay, leaving Messrs Fall and Dixon none the wiser. When the door lock to a lavatory jammed at the Argentine border, I managed to climb out with great difficulty before rushing back to the car.

At one point we were arguing about whether to change tyres at 14,000ft, which would have taken us 20 minutes, when the Volvo got a puncture in the middle of nowhere. Suddenly out of the rocks and cacti appeared a group of Inca Indians who were immediately recruited as a service crew.

Both bears have their own safety seats in Freddie's Rover 2000 and are raising money for the "Paddington Poozie Appeal", a joint venture by the Cancer Research Campaign and Action Research, which hopes to raise £50,000 for bone marrow transplants and the treatment of children with cancer.

Nick Brittan and his officials man the headquarters each day and see us all off each morning before jumping into light aircraft and flying to the next overnight stop. At Potosi in Bolivia, the runway had been shortened for repairs and, with the aircraft's weight so critical, one official was obliged to stay behind. He is hoping to catch up.



Full steam ahead in the original motor race along the beachfront at Bexhill-on-Sea

Remembering the first motor race — in Bexhill-on-Sea

WHERE DID THE first international motor race in Great Britain take place? The answer is not obvious and there may be several claimants but there is only one place that celebrates the event — Bexhill-on-Sea in Sussex.

Tomorrow and on Monday, hundreds of vehicles — vintage, veteran, classic, rally, replica, racing, American and (heavily represented for VE-Day) military — will gather in the town to join an Edwardian festival. Some will parade in pairs along the course from the Sackville Hotel towards Galleys Hill, where in 1902 pioneer motorists in the "heavy express class" travelled at up to 54mph despite a treacherously damp track. And all, remarkably, verified by electronic timing.

Horseless carriages speeding along at 54mph

In the words of a contemporary *Motoring Illustrated* report: "The great Bexhill motor races and speed trials were carried out on Whit Monday under circumstances that completely demonstrated that the horseless carriage has become a permanent British institution."

Regrettably, racing along the seafrost is no longer considered safe but vehicles from the period and from almost every other period will be joining the parade along the course. Proceeds will be donated to The Royal Air Force Benevolent Fund and several local charities. Entrance is free but programmes cost £1.50.

Organisers are hoping that the journey will be a little less fraught than in 1902, when: "The police... hid in hedges, under the encouragement of the magistrates, and arranged signal systems for proving that cars went at more than 12mph."

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with hedges, page 9

TRAVEL



Smooth
passage
along the
old Silk
Road

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WEEKEND

THE TIMES SATURDAY MAY 6 1995

HOW TO SPOT A FAKE

FABULOUS ANTIQUES



You have just arrived home having bought a rather pretty 18th-century coffee table. Suddenly you are struck by the feeling that all is not quite right. Have you just laid out several thousand pounds on a piece that would make an expert fall about laughing? Should you have taken more advice about whether the piece is genuine or fake?

A grasp of the history of faking can ease the anxiety. The great age of furniture fraud ran from 1880 to about 1930 and led, in 1931, to one of the best-known books on the subject.

Herbert Cescinsky's *The Gentle Art of Faking Furniture*. Cescinsky, an eminent connoisseur of furniture, took almost malicious pleasure in exposing the errors of rival furniture historians and collectors, such as Lord Leverhulme, who, he remarked, "had a positive genius for 'buying fakes'". Leverhulme's magnificent collection of 18th-century English commodes, now in the Lady Lever Art Gallery, Liverpool, has recently been catalogued by Lucy Wood, whose book deals with the fakes in the collection in such detail that it forms essential reading for

By Michael Hall

anybody who wants to learn how to distinguish genuine 18th-century craftsmanship from bogus.

During the 19th century, the faking business began to flourish hand in hand with a much more widespread appreciation of the so-called "golden age" of English furniture, from about 1660 to 1810. The smart West End dealer's shop with which we are familiar, stocked with choice pieces of well-polished

18th-century furniture, has its origins in the 1880s, when the idea that the 18th century embodied "good taste" started to take hold. Prices rose dramatically and, suddenly, such pieces became worth faking. As few of us can match Lord Leverhulme's purchasing power, few of us will make such spectacular mistakes, but more modest forgery committed in the 19th and early 20th centuries can still deceive.

One way to avoid fakes is to concentrate on areas where fakers have not operated. The great growth in interest in antiques of all

kinds since the Second World War has led to Victorian and 20th-century pieces being widely collected, yet the sheer quantity of material means that it has, on the whole, not been worth faking. So it is largely collectors of 18th-century pieces that have to be wary. But there are obvious guidelines to follow. Buying from a reputable dealer or saleroom is important, as is information about provenance: where did an object come from? However, Cescinsky's characteristically acid

Continued on page 3, col 1

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CHOICE

Planning an evening out, or a day with your family? *The Times* critics select the best entertainment

MUSEUMS

John Russell Taylor

A REDISCOVERY: In the great fire which consumed the original Palace of Westminster in 1834 (memorably recorded by Turner) it has always been assumed that all the paintings (mural and on panel) in Henry III's lavishly Painted Chamber were destroyed. Until two years ago, that is, when two panels from the ceiling, the earliest surviving English panel paintings, turned up in Bristol, in excellent condition. One shows an angel, the other a bearded prophet. They have been acquired by the British Museum with the help of the National Heritage Memorial Fund and the National Art Collections Fund, and are now on show in room 42, along with fragments from nearby St Stephen's Chapel.

British Museum, Great Russell Street, London WC1 (0171-636 1555). Mon to Sat, 10am-5pm; Sun, 2.30-6pm, until October, when the panels will be included in the exhibition *Medieval Kings from Westminster*. ☐

THOMAS GAINSBOROUGH: THE HARVEST WAGON: When Gainsborough painted his most famous and ambitious landscape, *The Harvest Wagon*, in 1767, he was particularly pleased with it. So, apparently, were his patrons, and in 1784-85 he painted the second version, sold directly to the Prince of Wales and given by him to Mrs Fitzherbert. The first version is now in Birmingham, at the Barber Institute, and the second is in the Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto. This exhibition brings the two together, along with 30 related paintings, drawings and prints, to illuminate the artist's creative processes. After its run in Birmingham it will be seen in Toronto.

GALLERIES

Richard Cork

GOMBRICH ON SHADOWS: The art historian E.H. Gombrich has selected a wonderfully illuminating show at the National Gallery. Taking the theme of cast shadows in Western art, he makes us look at even the most well-known paintings with fresh eyes. Sometimes, the shadows are illusionistic: one of them is attached to a fly on the head-dress of an unknown Swabian woman. But Caravaggio takes a far more theatrical approach, turning *The Supper at Emmaus* into a battlefield of rival shadows. Rembrandt is mesmerising, particularly in his portrait of a preacher bursting through the bounds of the picture-frame. Hendrick ter Brugghen's *The Concert* uses candlelight to turn friendly music-making into a darker, more apprehensive affair. Holbein's full-length portrait of the demure Christina of Denmark makes subtle use of the shadow on the green wall behind her. Gombrich himself stays out of view, but reveals his own elongated shadow in a photograph he took a few years ago in the setting sun.

National Gallery, Trafalgar Square, London WC2 (0171-839 3321), until June 18. ☐

MINKY MANKY: The title of this lively mixed show at the South London Gallery defies literal meaning. But the curator, Carl Freedman, wants it that way, and the cheekiness of the title suits the irreverent mood running through the show. Apart from Gilbert and George, the exhibition concentrates on young artists. The most celebrated, Damien Hirst, contributes a tantalising double-sided cage sculpture with a beach-ball suspended inside. An ingenious exercise in illusionism, its buoyancy departs from Hirst's usual preoccupation with death. And Gary Hume, whose paintings in household glass are also showing at White Cube, copies a famous 15th-century Flemish portrait only to deface it with yellow paint.

South London Gallery, Peckham Road, London SE5 (0171-703 6120), until May 14; White Cube, Duke Street, London, SW1 (0171-930 5373), until May 13.

FILMS

Geoff Brown

CLERKS (18): Last year's comic hit of the American independent scene takes us through a long day in the life of Dante, a cash register clerk in Leonardo, New Jersey. "I'm not even supposed to be here today," he bleats. Customers not up. His personal life unravels. A corpse is found in the toilet. And Randal, master of insult at the video store next door, keeps butting in. Kevin Smith, the 23-year-old director, filmed this cheaper-than-cheap feature after hours at his own workplace. Technically rough, but the grainy images never hide the rude wit, or the memorable portraits by local actors of a reckless young generation.

Clapham Picture House (0171-498 3323); Metro (0171-437 0757); MGMs: Fulham Road (0171-370 2636); Trocadero (0171-434 0031); Renoir (0171-837 8402).



A medieval panel painting of an angel, rescued from Henry III's Painted Chamber at Westminster

LITTLE ODESSA (18): Another young American, 24-year-old James Gray, shows his mettle in this vivid drama about the Russian immigrants of Brooklyn's Brighton Beach. The film — more family saga than a gangster shooting match — is sometimes muddled and pretentious. But Gray shows astonishing authority for a new director: actors such as Vanessa Redgrave, Maximilian Schell and Tim Roth fail to unnerve him.

MGMs: Chelsea (0171-352 5096); Haymarket (0171-839 1527); Tottenham Court Road (0171-636 6148); Screen/Hill (0171-435 3366); Warner (0171-437 4343).

• More films, page 6.

DANCE

John Percival

BALLET PRELOCAJ: Angelin Preljocaj's short visit to Sadler's Wells last year won an Olivier nomination; he returns with the works that proved popular then, plus others in two programmes. The first (Tuesday 9, Thursday 11, Saturday 13 evening, and Sunday 14) features his tempestuous treatment of Stravinsky's *Les Noces*

together with the British premiere of his latest creation, *Perle d'Essai* *Sur Le Temps Passe*. Programme two (Wednesday 10, Friday 12, Saturday 13 matinee), combines the duet *Traité d'Union*, and his reinterpretation of *Le Spectre de la Rose* with a reworking of one of his earliest pieces, *Larmes Blanches*.

Sadler's Wells Theatre, Rosebery Avenue, London EC1 (0171-713 6000), Tues 9 to Fri 12, Sun 14, 7.30pm; Sat 13, 3.30pm and 8pm. ☐

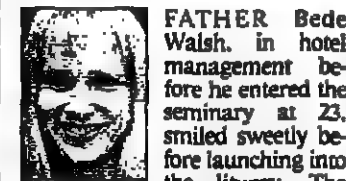
'BRUCE TIMES TWO: Christopher Bruce's son, Mark Bruce, makes his British choreographic debut to complete this year's Spring Loaded Festival at The Place. He and five other dancers perform *Love Sick* to live music for guitar and percussion. A week later, Rambert Dance Company gives two of Christopher Bruce's most popular works, *Swansong* and *Rooster*, at Swindon, together with the world premiere of *Jupiter* *Is Crying* by the Swedish choreographer Per Jonsson to a specially composed score by Sven-David Sandström.

The Place Theatre, Duke's Road, London WC1 (0171-387 0031), Thurs-Sat, 8pm; Wyvern Theatre, Swindon (01793 524481), Wed 17 to Sat 20, 7.30pm.

• More theatre, page 6.

Ruth Gledhill visited the church of St Giles in Cheadle, built by Augustus Pugin

AT YOUR SERVICE



FATHER Bede Walsh, in hotel management before he entered the seminary at 23, smiled sweetly before launching into the liturgy. The prospect of two readings, a gospel, homily, two baptisms and a eucharist before him had only increased the bounce and energy of a delivery which seemed none the worse for his return from a holiday in France at 3am that morning. "God our Father, may we look forward with hope to your resurrection, for you have made us your sons and daughters and restored the joy of our youth," he said, eyes twinkling. Indeed, the whole of his faintly rotund body sparkled, vested as he was with the ornate gold chasuble worn by Bishop Nicholas Wiseman, who later became Archbishop of Westminster, for the consecration of this church, the priceless gem of Augustus Pugin, the Gothic Revival architect. Pugin converted to Catholicism in 1835 and believed a decline in the arts was the result of the spiritual decline caused by the Reformation. Celebrations are being planned for the church's 150th anniversary next year.

This richly ornamented church has a congregation of 450 each week at its two Saturday and Sunday masses. Of 16 servers assisting the priest, about six were girls, introduced last year after the Vatican said this was in accordance with Catholic teaching. We sat at the back of the church in front of the choir, who led us in the first verse of the popular evangelical hymn *Majesty*, while priest and servers processed up the aisle and stopped beside us. Everybody turned towards the gospel for the reading, from John 21, after which Fr Bede and his attendants processed back down the aisle to the next verse of *Majesty*.

Fr Bede did not climb into the carved pulpit, hewn in one block from the quarry on the nearby Alton estate, but arrived at it from some inner sanctum by a back



Father Bede Walsh, vested in gold chasuble, celebrating mass

door. "With the baptisms we can see literally that Jesus is about new life in Christ. Resurrection is about living out our new life in friendship with Christ," he said. "We welcome these children into the family of God by placing on their forehead the sign of the Cross, a small but important gesture of our faith." He asked God "to help these children be strong" should the "shadow of the Cross" fall upon them during their lives.

Pugin had already been commissioned by the 10th Earl of Shrewsbury to design alterations to the nearby Alton Towers, now a theme park, when the Earl asked him to build a church for Cheadle also. He intended it to be "a

memorial for future ages". Visitors sometimes speculate on what Pugin would have made of the modern Alton Towers, where he designed the chapel roof. The chapel was until recently used to house a model railway but today, in contrast to Cheadle, it stands as empty as a tomb.

Over the chancel at Cheadle is a painting by Hauser of the *Doom of Judgement*, and it was here that the two babies, Charlotte Mary Heath and Anthony David Allen, swathed in white robes and anointed with oil before the sermon, were brought by parents and godparents to the font. Fr Bede confronted the entire congregation with his questions, "I therefore ask all of you, do you

reject Satan?" "I do," we responded. "Do you believe in God the father, almighty creator of heaven and earth?" He invited the children in church to go to the font during the baptism itself, pouring water over the heads of the babies, who remained silent throughout. "If you want to know how I do it, I use cold water and they never cry," he explained, leading us into the offertory hymn, *The King of Love My Shepherd Is*.

For the eucharist he moved with the servers behind the ornately carved rood screen to the sanctuary. To end, he lit baptismal candles from the Easter Paschal Candle, hand-painted by a Benedictine monk, sending the babies out into the world to be a light to Christ and "disperse the seeds of gloom and darkness".

Roman Catholic parish church of St Giles, 19 Chapel St, Cheadle, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire, ST10 1DU. Tel: 0850 592377.

PARISH PRIEST: Fr Bede Walsh.

ARCHITECTURE: Described by its architect, Augustus Pugin, as "the only perfect revival that has been accomplished" and "Cheadle, perfect Cheadle, Cheadle my consolation in all afflictions." ★★★★★

HOMILY: Fr Bede took advantage of a Christmas in our midst: "Today in baptism, God promises new life." ★★

MUSIC: Mix of ancient and modern hymns led by plainclothes choir. ★★★

LITURGY: Standard modern Catholic mass enhanced by the romance of the environment and the infectious enthusiasm of the priest. ★★★

AFTER-SERVICE CARE: Coffee and church gossip in the shop bought three years ago by the church. The shop pays for Fr Bede's mobile phone and other modern ministerial essentials. ★★★★★

SPIRITUAL HIGH: Where Protestants can meet an exquisite nemesis. ★★★★★

★ stars are awarded to a maximum of five.

OPERA

Rodney Milnes

THE PEARL FISHERS: Bizet's treasure-trove of great tunes (never mind the plot, or in this case the doty production) might almost have been composed for Opera North: their darkly glittering Victorian theatre is the perfect size, and their eager young chorus and orchestra lash into the melodies with infectious enthusiasm. Their truffle-hound casting experts have come up with an outstanding French baritone, André Cognet, and if Maria D'Aragnies does not exactly give the impression of a chaste Celanese priestess, she sings nicely and looks very French. Arthur Davies roars gently as any dove in the tenor role, and the whizz-bang conductor is Dietrich Bernet. Two hours of pure, undiluted musical pleasure.

Grand Theatre, New Briggate, Leeds (0113 244 0971/245 9351), Fri 12, 7.15pm. ☐

COSI' FAN TUTTE: Last chance to catch the English National Opera's fresh, sparky revival of Mozart's comedy, which in Nicolette Molnar's hands manages to be quietly funny without ignoring the dark undertones. Rita Cullis and the accomplished American tenor Charles Workman lead the young cast, and Nicholas Kok conducts a fleet, light-fingered account of the score. The ENO at its best.

Coliseum, St Martin's Lane, London WC2 (0171-632 8300), Fri 12, 7pm. ☐

ROCK

David Sinclair

KIRSTY MACCOLL: Never the most confident of stage performers, Kirsty MacColl can nevertheless boast one of the more distinguished repertoires in pop. Her best songs — gushingly described by Johnny Marr as having "the wit of Ray Davies and the harmonic invention of the Beach Boys" — have been collected on her current album, *Galore*, which is still in the Top 20, two months after its release. **Redcar Bowl (01642 480636), May 7; Glasgow, Glasgow (0141-332 1120), May 8; UEA, Norwich (01603 505401), May 10; Roadmender, Northampton (01604 604222), May 11; Corn Exchange, Cambridge (01223 463204), May 13; Leicester Arena (0116 255576), May 14; Manchester University (0161-275 2930), May 15; Town and Country, Leeds (01532 800100), May 17; Sheffield University (01742 724076), May 18; Wulfrun Hall, Wolverhampton (01902 312030), May 19; St David's Hall, Cardiff (01222 371236), May 21; Pyramid Centre, Portsmouth (01705 826666), May 22; Forum, London NW5 (0171-284 2200), May 23.**

BOYZ II MEN: Boyz II Men are the black American equivalent of

our own, dear Take That, which makes this belated British concert debut something of an event. Superb singers with a wealth of material ranging from barbershop harmony routines to swingbeat, the Boyz combine modern techniques with the poise and showmanship of traditional R & B acts. As this is their only scheduled appearance in Britain, it is a show that should not be missed.

Hammersmith Apollo, London W6 (0181-741 4868), May 11.

CLASSICAL

Richard Morrison

YO-YO ON THE UP: That ebullient Chinese-American cellist Yo-Yo Ma virtually takes up residence at the Barbican over the next few days, hosting five concerts that show off his manifold talents. First comes the supreme test of technique and interpretative depth: Bach's Cello Suites (Wednesday, 6.30pm). On Friday (7.30pm) he plays the Elgar Concerto with the LSO under Sir Colin Davis, and on Sunday 14 (3pm) he leads a children's concert. Next week, rather more unexpected sides with Nashville Strings he explores the bluegrass tradition; then, with the London Classical Players, he takes up period instrument and style for Brahms and Beethoven.

Barbican, Silk Street, London EC2 (0171-638 8891). ☐

FRISCO SOUNDS: One of the biggest success stories in American music has been the alliance of Herbert Blomstedt with the San Francisco Symphony. Blomstedt may not be the most charismatic maestro in the world, or even in San Francisco, but he can certainly prepare and rehearse a top-quality performance. Now he is moving on, so this European tour is a valedictory effort. It parades the orchestra in ripe Romantic scores by Nielsen, Sibelius and Strauss. **Festival Hall, South Bank, London SE1 (0171-928 8800), Tues 9, 7.30pm.**



Yo-Yo Ma is at the Barbican

JAZZ

Clive Davis

JOHN SCOTFIELD: While Pat Metheny has broadened his appeal by tapping into the soft-rock audience, John Scofield is surely the most exciting of contemporary guitarists. Harder-edged than Metheny's dreamscapes, his compositions carry off the difficult trick of combining cerebral improvisation with the more elemental thrust of rock and blues. *Hand Jive*, his last album for Blue Note, was his funkiest effort since 1986's *Blue Matter*, thanks in no small part to the wailing sax of Eddie Harris. Harris is absent from the current line-up, but Scofield still has Larry Goldings on keyboards. **Newcastle Jazz Festival, The Playhouse, Newcastle (0191-230 5151), Thur 11, 7.30pm; Leeds International Music Festival, Civic Theatre, Cookridge St (0113 247 6962), Fri 12, 7.30pm; Jazz Café, Parkway, London NW1 (0171-916 6000), Sat 13, 9pm.**



Funky guitarist John Scofield

COURTNEY PINE: The tenor-toting figurehead of the 1980s jazz revival has passed through his out-and-out Coltrane phase, and is currently devoting his thoughts to fusing jazz and hip-hop. His band tops the bill on Monday, the second day of the Barbican's free Bank Holiday festival, appearing opposite David Jean Baptiste and the more lyrical saxophonist Julian Argüelles. Tomorrow will be given over to more mainstream tastes, ranging from the Echoes of Ellington Orchestra to the 100 Club All Stars. **The Great British Jazz Band and the insouciant partnership of Tommy Whittle and Barbara Jay, Barbican Centre, Silk St, London EC2 (0171-638 8891), tomorrow, 12.30pm to 5.45pm; Mon 8, 12.30pm to 5.30pm.** ☐

CHILDREN

LONDON

Watch Shakespeare's Globe Theatre being re-built and buy your own batch of thatch which is being used by restorers to roof the arena. Marvelous, on-the-spot English and history lesson in one. **The Globe, New Globe Walk, Bankside SE1 (0171-928 6406).** Today, tomorrow and daily, 10am to 5pm. Adults £4, children £2.50.



A thatcher at work on the roof of the Globe Theatre

Ian Saville's Magic Show for Kids is the title of this hour-long performance of magic, clowning, ventriloquism and illusion. Lots of audience participation. **Battersea Arts Centre, Lavender Hill, SW11 (0171-223 2223), Today, 2.30pm.** Adults £3.50, children £1.75.

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

Family Roller Skating Games with prizes and music: also Kids Club for junior (and adult) learners. **Rollers, Denbigh North Leisure Estate, Blechley, Milton Keynes (01908 366440), Today from 12.30pm for games (Kids Club starts at 10am), and tomorrow from 10am.** Adults £3.25, children £2.75.

CHESHIRE

Meet Four New Baby Penguins: Plus the first tapir to be born at the zoo (looks like a pig with humpbug camouflage stripes); and two baby orang-utans. Also children's farm. **Chester Zoo, Upton by Chester (01244 380280), Today, tomorrow and daily from 10am.** Adults £7, children £4.50. ☐

DERBYSHIRE

Can You Recognise an Oak Tree or a Beech? Learn about different species of trees. Also demonstrations of steam-driven rack-saws; wood turning and stick making. **Elvaston Castle Country Park and Working Estate Museum, Borrowash Road, Elvaston, Thulston (01332 571342), Sunday from 10am.** Adults £1.20, children 60p, family £3 (two adults and two children).

NORTHANTS

Bring Your Favourite Soft Toy for a Sponsored Parachute Jump (organisers strap a mini parachute to its back); also children's fun fair; and Punch and Judy. **Lampart Hall, Lampart, Northampton (01604 642185), Tomorrow and Monday from 10am.** Adults £2.50 (includes entry to craft fair), children free. ☐

SCOTLAND

Explore a Child-sized "rabbit burrow" and handle young chicks in the wild bird hatchery. See also wallabies, llamas and other animals. **Auchingarrich Wildlife Centre, Glasgarrow Road, Comrie (01764 679469), Today, tomorrow and every day from 10am.** Adults £3.50, children £2.50. Under 4s free. ☐

SUSSEX

Tightrope Walking, juggling, acrobatics at the Cirque Surreal to music by Rick Wakeman. **Preston Park, Brighton (01260 276627), Today, 2.30pm and 7.30pm.** Adults from £8. Children from £6. ☐

WALES

Family Fun Day: Meet Postman Pat and Fireman Sam; try your skills at archery. **Dyffryn House and Gardens, St Nicholas, Cardiff (01222 593328), Tomorrow, 11am.** Adults £2, children £1.50, family £6 (two adults and two children). ☐

Children's Circus, Face Painting and Games at the May Fair. **Welsh Folk Museum, St Fagans, Cardiff (01222 569441), Today, tomorrow and Monday from 10am.** Adults £5, children £2.50. Under-5s free. ☐

JANE BIDDER

• Further Bank Holiday listings, page 23.

COVER STORY

3

'Pedigrees as a rule, where furnished at all, are usually of the most sketchy description ...
'A large house in the country' may mean anything from a Stately Home to Maidstone Jail'

Continued from page 1
remark comes to mind: "Pedigrees as a rule, where furnished at all, are usually of the most sketchy description..." A large house in the country may mean anything from a Stately Home to Maidstone Jail.

A furniture expert will usually look for a label or stamp, usually in the form of a brand. As with only a few exceptions, English 18th-century furniture, unlike French, is usually anonymous, there has been little temptation to fake such details, but a stamp may reveal later manufacture. Fine pieces of furniture in 18th-century styles were made in the late Victorian period by firms such as Holland and Holland and Edwards and Roberts, who did use stamps, and their pieces are now much sought after.

Then an expert will ask more general questions: does the piece look right for the period from which it purports to come? There are no such things as Queen Anne sideboards, Georgian coffee tables or miniature tallboys, but that has not stopped fakers supplying such pieces.

Some items of furniture are so desirable, and therefore so fakeable, that they will always be questioned: a complete, large (anything over six) set of matching dining chairs, for example, is often original only in part, so some may either be later copies or they may have been heavily restored around one small original fragment.

Given that the piece is, in theory, genuine, does it look old? Or, as a dealer would say, does it have a good patina — that surface quality which only time can give? Has it been well-polished over the years? If so, dust will have been worked into crevices, giving them a darker look than the highlights.

Be suspicious if the surface is too uniform: people usually regularly polish only the tops of furniture, so if the legs of a table have exactly the same appearance as the rest, something may be wrong.

Look, too, for areas of wear — at the bottom of a grandfather clock, for instance, where people's feet will have knocked it, or the curved ends of chair arms, where hands will have rubbed them smooth. Clever fakers can imitate all this, of course, and it is said that once they would lead their pieces to hotels or restaurants, where, in a few weeks, they would receive enough wear to look old.

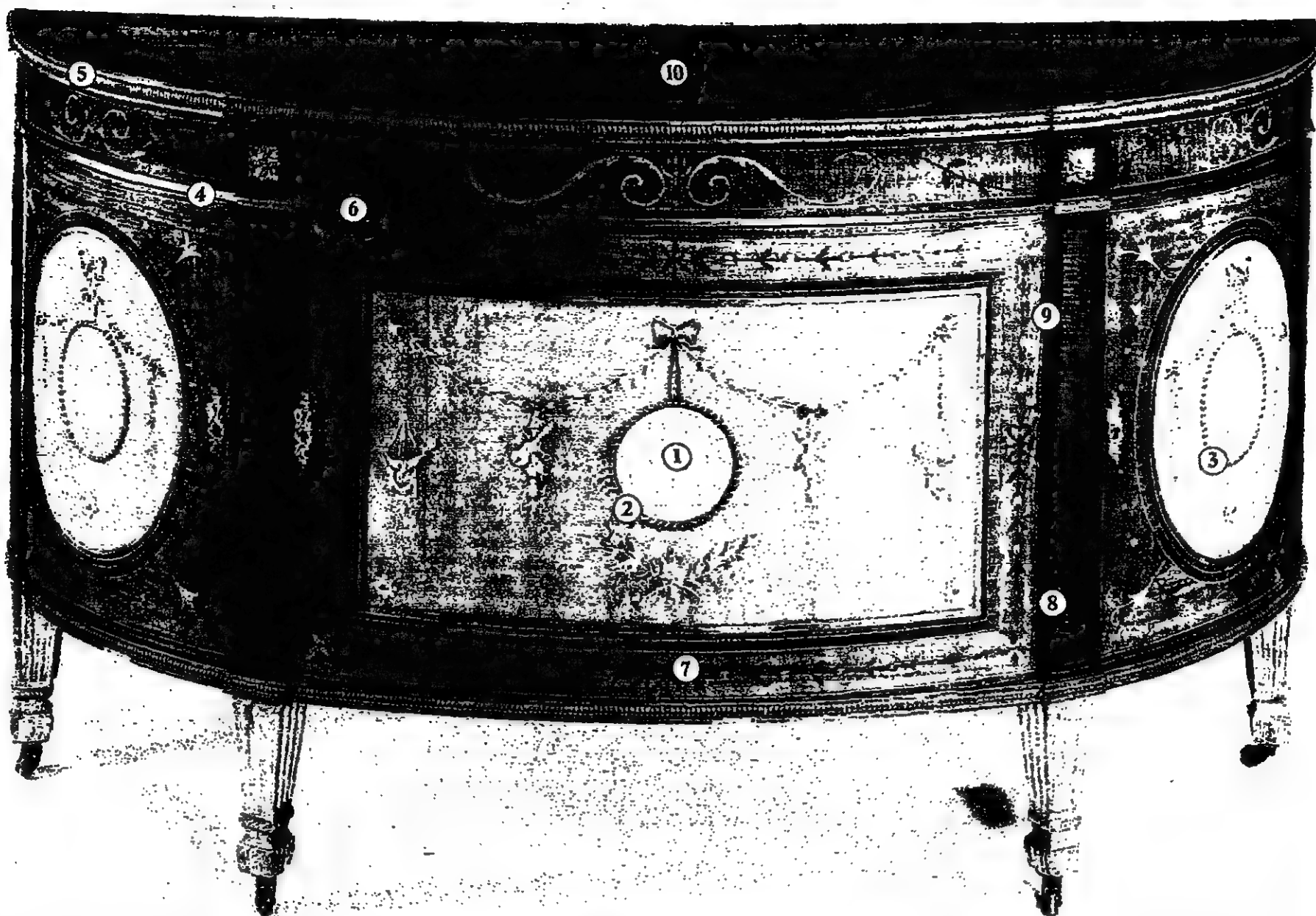
Damage was often faked. Sometimes the faking was based on the theory that a buyer would notice an obvious flaw, and would be so reassured when the crooked dealer offered to repair it for nothing that there would be no further examination.

Worm holes were supposedly initiated by a drill or, according to popular legend, a blunderbuss, but the straightness of the hole would have revealed such fakes, as worms curve about in search of the softest wood. A good faker would use worm-eaten timber. Czesinski remarked: "An old worm-eaten piece of wood, if left in the dark with a penicillium full of modern furniture, from February to June, will 'antique' the lot."

Wear can be too easy to imitate. As Michael Cowley, head of the furniture department at Phillips the auctioneers, points out, some old oak furniture has been "distressed" too much to be convincing. "You sometimes see the stretchers of chairs and tables which have been artificially curved in a completely unnatural way," he says.

Even if the components of a chair or whatever look old, stop to ask if the piece can have been "improved". Few good fakes are made from scratch but consist, instead, of old pieces altered to make them more valuable.

In general, the more elaborate the decoration on a piece, the more desirable it was, and this was especially true in the mid 19th-century, when a richly ornamented look was fashionable. Modest pieces of early furniture were often recarved. Mr Cowley recalls being shown a Victorian photograph of a country-house carpenter standing with his chisel in front of an Elizabethan overmantel which he had just finished "improving".



THE two commodes, above and below, from the Lady Lever Art Gallery, Liverpool, appear at first glance to be 18th-century antiques, and were bought as such at the turn of the century by Lord Leverhulme. However, the top one, with the Wedgwood medallions, is a fake — an amalgamation of two or three pieces of furniture. Here are some of the details which proved that Leverhulme's purchase — valued in 1904 at £450 — was not all it appeared to be.

1 Medallions of Bacchante boys are 19th-century

SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

- copies of a design executed by Wedgwood in 1779.
- The medallions are crudely cemented to the doors.
- Expert opinion of the medallions casts doubt over the whole of the green panels inset into the doors.
- Doors have a different curvature to the rest of the piece, and this curvature cannot be accounted for by warping.
- The exterior mouldings, such as the gilt band along the top of the frieze rail, have been crudely ebonised

- The nail marks visible on the under side of the frieze rail suggest that the rail once belonged to a different piece of furniture.
- The marquetry on the doors is not as fine and fluent as that on the top.
- Some of the screws attaching hinges are modern, others 19th century.
- Hinges are 19th century, though not replacements.
- The inside of this commode reveals a crude all-over pink wash — probably an attempt to conceal the different woods used in the construction.



THIS commode, one of Lord Leverhulme's more successful purchases (made on June 3, 1918), was probably the work of Mayhew and Ince about 1775-80. It was valued in 1906 at £400. However, as Lucy Wood, a commode expert at the Lady Lever Art Gallery, says: "It is far easier to say what is wrong with a piece than what makes a piece right." This particular piece of furniture has a clearly documented provenance; the construction is near perfect and in keeping; there is no colour wash on the inside of the commode; the top is more faded than the sides; and all the marquetry matches

example, into a much more desirable small cupboard. Often, the market will favour a piece which furniture historians would deplore. Mr Cowley recalls the enthusiasm in the saleroom for an early 18th-century Italian giltwood console table that had obviously been much

reduced in size, whereas an untampered example would probably have proved harder to sell. So, if you buy big pieces, you are more likely to get originals.

Other technical points to look out for — such as the correct thickness of wood for a particular period, the

evidence of hand tools being used, and the difference between machine-made and hand-made screws and nails — are not matters on which an amateur can easily draw the right conclusion. Good fakers reused old hand-made nails, and the presence of screws in a piece of

furniture made before about 1670, when they were first introduced, certainly indicates later repair or alteration, but not necessarily any intention to deceive. If a screw or nail is old, it will usually have oxidised, staining the wood brown.

Today, museums and collectors are beginning to develop a more relaxed attitude to fakes, which are now seen as objects of interest in their own right. In London, the Victoria and Albert Museum has for long had a gallery devoted to fakes from its own collection, and in 1990 the British Museum mounted an exhibition of fakes, which included many embarrassing objects banished to the storerooms.

Where do you start if you want the reassurance that something is genuine? However newly sophisticated our attitude to forgery may have become, the question "real or fake?" is still an important one.

Even experts may fall silent here: a survey of the history of fakes shows that the question is often impossible to answer. We like to assume that with the passage of years a fake will inevitably reveal itself and that, if it does not, scientific tests will provide a definitive answer. It now seems hard to understand that anybody was taken in by Pildown Man or the letters written by Mary Magdalene to Lazarus, which were "discovered" in France in the 19th century and fooled many scholars before somebody asked how they came to be written in French.

Yet we still do not know whether a document as celebrated as the supposedly medieval "Vinland Map", which depicts part of America, is a fake or not, despite the scientific and scholarly tests that have been applied to it, and furniture provides equally baffling puzzles. In the mid-19th century, Henry

Cole, the director of the V&A, persuaded the Government to buy the huge collection of Renaissance antiques formed by a French lawyer, Jacques Soulanges. This included several pieces of elaborate French and Italian furniture which, in the course of this century, raised such doubts about their authenticity that in the 1950s several were deaccessioned as "fakes".

Although assumed to have been made up in the 1830s from genuine old fragments and new carving, it has proved almost impossible to determine when and how this furniture was made, and it now seems likely that one of the deaccessioned pieces was genuine.

If the experts cannot tell, what hope is there for the rest of us?

When asked this question, Mr Cowley was reassuring. "Out-and-out fakes are rare. What a collector has to learn is to distinguish untampered originals from altered pieces and reproductions."

A good grounding in furniture history is essential, especially as it provides guidelines about the origin of fakes and imitations. Until the 18th century, the sort of antiquities collectors wanted were the relics of the Classical past dug up in Italy, and from the 15th century onwards there was an enormous trade in fake Roman sculpture, jewels and coins. But in the 18th century, when collectors became interested in the British past, connoisseurs, such as Horace Walpole, attempted to furnish their Gothic Revival homes with medieval and Tudor furniture.

A lot of what Walpole bought was of far more recent origin, but he would no doubt enjoy the fact that a collector who today bought a bogus piece of Elizabethan furniture that had once belonged to him would have something more valuable than the genuine item.

Spotting something that was evidently produced with deception in mind is not easy. People have often bought pieces of furniture known to have been drastically altered just because they liked the result. Authenticity did not matter much, just as people who buy Rolex watches or Chanel No 5 from a pavement seller in the high street know that they are not likely to be getting the real thing: they are happy with something that gives the appearance of being real. That is why fakes are so revealing about the past.

Today's fakers no longer have the techniques or time needed to produce Classical busts or Chippendale commodes. Backstreet forgers' workshops, which once were busy dipping "old" oak furniture in baths of acid and beating it with chains to imitate the wear of centuries, have long ago been given over to the manufacture of "vuitton" luggage and "Carier" watches. In the 20th century, a bogus trademark is worth as much as a bogus antique.

Banknote forgery appears to be another growth area, as the haul of almost perfect bank notes — with a face value of £18 million — made in London two weeks ago indicates.

Once, American collectors were fooled by fake Colonial furniture: now they, and we, have to be equally wary of such things as fake Apple computers.

Future historians may find "Georgian" coffee tables and video cabinets — yes, they do exist — as fascinating as Walpole's "Tudor" furniture. So, as long as you like it, perhaps you should not worry too much about the surprisingly cheap Queen Anne sideboard you bought recently. It might not be authentic, but something much more interesting instead.

● The author is the architectural editor of Country Life.

● Lucy Wood's book, *The Lady Lever Art Gallery: Catalogue of Commodes*, is published by HMSO in association with NMGM, price £50.

Cover concept by MARTIN HARRISON
Photography by RAY MAIN
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Picture of commodes on the page by courtesy of LADY LEVER ART GALLERY, LIVERPOOL

PEEL AN ORANGE WITH ONE HAND.

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FORGET IT ALL FOR AN



To prevent loyal readers from slipping peacefully towards early brain-death, I declare this column to be totally free of the following ingredients:

- a) Miss Joanna Lumley receiving her OBE;
- b) The National Lottery;
- c) Dame Vera Lynn;
- d) Those Red Rum 30th birthday presents in full.

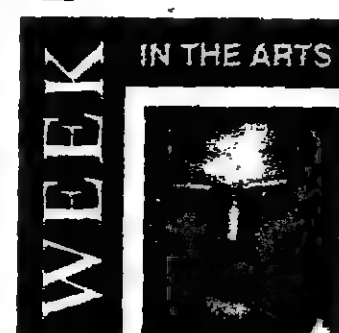
Which leaves what? Well, from the "truth is more implausible than a Jeffrey Archer thriller" department of *The Times* I have acquired the following esoteric nuggets of information, which I hope will bring a little joy to your Bank Holiday weekend. Anybody who doubts the thesis that life — and more particularly, the less exalted regions of the entertainment industry — is indeed a rich and unexpected tapestry, read on! The rest of you can move swiftly to the sports pages, where I trust that a full analysis of those Red Rum birthday presents may be acquired from a team of top experts.

Not a lot of people wish to know this

Congratulations, firstly, to the New London Orchestra for devising this year's most original excuse. You have to admit it. "Devaluation of Mexican peso delays premiere of flute concerto" is the work of genius. That is the headline over promotional material explaining the circumstances of the orchestra's May 18 concert in St John's Smith Square. And like all the best excuses it is so unlikely that it might just be true, although I still prefer the bleak headline in an East Anglian newspaper a few years ago: "Wife used manuscript of new novel as lining for hamster cage, claims local author".

Speaking of hamsters, the "world's first all-animal comedy series" is about to descend on us. And please don't say that you can watch Question Time from the House of Commons if you want to see that sort of bestiality. I am referring to the new Channel 4 series *Squawkie-talkie* — a title

that perhaps indicates the level of humour to which we must become accustomed. "Creators John Sparkes and Pete Baldie have spent two years grappling through an undergrowth of natural history footage," a Channel 4 spokesperson enthuses with lyrical fervour. "The hybrid of comedic scripts and natural footage has been born." Good to know that Channel 4 is still providing sophisticated programmes for discerning viewers.



RICHARD MORRISON

The tour opens, perhaps a shade unpromisingly, not at the V&A or one of the swankier Bond Street galleries, but at the Lewisham Centre in south London. It will include such priceless relics as Elvis's football, Elvis's karate belt, Elvis's boots and shirts, Elvis's last motorbike and, most intriguingly,

a "gun given to his doctor". For what, exactly? Perhaps the answer lies in Lewisham.

Meanwhile, a treat for our Woking readers. When *The Rocky Horror Show* opens there next week the cast will include not only that urbane compere of ancient radio quizzes, Nicholas Parsons, but also the Olympic skating champion, Robin Cousins. Or as Woking's New Victoria Theatre proudly proclaims: "Robin Cousins will be swapping his ice skates for suspenders." That's showbiz for you. Triple toe-loops today; cross-dressing with Nicholas Parsons tomorrow.

And while we are on musical matters, may I give advance warning to the citizens of Birmingham? Their beloved Symphony Hall will soon be hit by, in the words of the excited promoter, "20 Grand Pianos! 60 Pianists! 120 Hands!!!". All those pianos, all those hands and (not least) all

those exclamation marks will be assembled in the autumn for the British premiere of a *Grand Piano Symphony* by the American composer John Kozar. "Never in living memory has a musical event of this scale or nature been attempted in Britain," says the promoter, and for once I think that this is not too far from the truth.

In fact, this is going to be the year in which the music business finally turns topsy-turvy. The latest statistics, for instance, reveal that Melody Radio — the station that plays non-stop Manic Street Preachers — is now attracting almost as many listeners in the 15-24 age range as among over-35s. Why? Is it another disturbing sign of gormlessness among Generation X? Nobody knows, though you will doubtless hear much vintage waffle in the coming

months as pop sociologists attempt to explain the phenomenon.

Meanwhile, desperate classical-music promoters are devising increasingly wild stunts to attract punters to symphony concerts. The latest wheeze is an event called "The Classic", which takes place in Wembley Stadium on July 22. To pep up those boring old arias and symphonies, the promoters have organised "bypasses, marching bands, American cheerleaders, parades of animals, 100 riders and horses, lasers and fireworks." Just like the Wembley Hall, then.

Finally, good news and bad news for Mstislav Rostropovich. He has been awarded Sweden's most prestigious musical honour. On Tuesday, he will receive the 1995 Polar Music Prize from the King of Sweden himself. That's the good news. The bad news is — so will Elton John.

As well, that puts the greatest instrumentalist of our age firmly in his place. As someone once said, it is a funny old world. And did I ever tell you about the 30-year-old horse who has received birthday presents from all over Britain?

Desperate cry of the lonely

THEATRE: At the Cottesloe Benedict Nightingale applauds *Skylight*, David Hare's strong new drama

This is not one of David Hare's big, thundering works, like his law-and-order jeremiad, *Murmuring Judges*, or his lament for Kinross, *Absence of War*. It is an intimate piece with more than passing resemblances to his *Secret Rapunzel*. It, too, is much preoccupied with love and the elusiveness of happiness. It, too, has a heroine whose unpretentious decency makes others feel rebuked.

Even if it were not superbly acted by Michael Gambon and Lia Williams, *Skylight* would have a distinctly Chekhovian feel. Especially in Act II, it is as if Lopakhin, the restless businessman of *The Cherry Orchard*, were thrust into an argument with Astrov, the idealistic but embattled doctor of *Uncle Vanya*. One rather large difference is that Tom is an English restaurateur and, in deference to progress, Kyra a woman

teacher in the East End. A still bigger one is that, until Tom's wife found out, the two of them were having a love affair.

The setting is a tacky, wintry flat off the North Circular that, as someone says, "has indoor fog". Williams's Kyra lives here without complaint, to the incomprehension of Gambon's Tom, who feels that she is squandering her intellect on no-hopers and, with his wife dead of cancer, wants to reactivate their life together. That is also the wish of his 18-year-old son (Daniel Betts), who launches Richard Eyre's production by appearing from nowhere to complain that loneliness has turned his father into "a stupid animal, licking his pain".

So he has, too. When Gambon makes his first entrance on a National Theatre stage for eight years, my instant feeling was, God, he's let himself go. Beneath the slick grey hair, the face seems coarser, the body more bloated, giving the impression of an over-the-hill Incredible Hulk. His words are in line with his looks, too, being full of sub-Osbornian bile about soulless bankers, the death of enter-



Edging towards love: Michael Gambon and Lia Williams in *Skylight* at the National

prise, and the ills of his adolescent son. But then the face reddens, bunches, collapses in helpless tears, and you see the man's desolation.

Old Father Time, never a friendly force in Hare's plays, has again turned optimism into baffled confusion. The confident 1980s tycoon is at sea professionally and emotionally in the 1990s. It is powerfully yet subtly done, and there is more to come. We hear less of Tom's guilty, dissatisfied bluster in Act II, and more of

Kyra's obscure struggles in her sink school. At one point she angrily launches into the most articulate defence I have heard of the professions it is fashionable to sneer at: social workers, counsellors, probation officers, "those who try to clear out society's drains".

A sign that, however personal Hare's concerns, he never loses sight of the political dimension? Certainly. An example of the priggishness of which he has sometimes accused himself? Not at all. For

proof of that you need only listen to the counter-arguments Tom is allowed to put — among them the possibly unfair claim that Kyra finds it easier to give herself momentarily to a cause than full-time to a person — and watch Williams at work. Behind that furrowed, outpitting brow and puckered, upright mouth, you are never in doubt that there are currents, swells and surges. It is a fine, strongly felt performance — and a strong, finely felt play.

POP: John Street on The Charlatans

Indolent charm

At the UEA, Norwich, they amble on stage to play a series of R & B anthems to indolence. Singer Tim Burgess moans and sneers, shuffling lyrics over the elongated rhythms of Martin Blunt's bass and John Brooks's drums. Can't get out of bed makes it clear

where they stand on the Protestant work ethic.

They may praise laziness; they don't practise it. The set is animated by Rob Collins's stunning performance at the keyboard. The finest moments occur when he and guitarist Mark Collins bounce phrases

off each other like a bickering couple.

While these two grab the musical attention, most eyes focus on Burgess. He may not always have the firmest grip on the notes, but he is hard to ignore. With high cheekbones and full lips, he pouts and looks aggrieved, never quite losing our sympathy, if never quite convincing us of his suffering. It is a fine, if familiar rock pose, and one that guarantees the Charlatans their supporters.

GREAT BRITISH HOPES

Rising stars in the arts firmament

NEAL FOSTER

Age 29

Profession: Actor-manager

Where? Foster has single-handedly resuscitated the Birmingham Old Rep Theatre. Celebrated actors from Laurence Olivier to Derek Jacobi walked the boards of this vintage venue, which was built in 1913. But when the Birmingham Rep Company moved home, the old place vanished into obscurity for 20 years. Foster currently runs the Birmingham Stage Company there, producing and acting in everything.



How did he manage it? In order to raise the money that he needed to reopen the theatre, Foster took the bull by the horns and doorknocked the stars. Although he was fresh out of drama school, he managed to persuade everyone from Judi Dench to Dustin Hoffman to be interviewed by him live at the Young Vic and then at the Playhouse in London's West End.

What does the Old Rep put on? Foster embraces classic, contemporary and children's plays, with a popular dedication to Roald Dahl. He has an eye for crowd-pullers, bringing Richard Dreyfuss to the United Kingdom to direct *Hamlet*, which certainly packed them in even if Dreyfuss did a fairly dire job. At the age of 24 Foster himself wrote and directed a spoof *Hamlet* which went to the West End for a Christmas run. He is back in London with his current production *Crystal Clear*, which has just transferred to the King's Head.

His history? "I declared that I was going to act when I was eight years old. I went to Warwick University for seven weeks. But it was when I was studying *The Entertainer* in the library that I simply thought I should be doing this, not reading it." Between swapping to Bristol Old Vic Drama School, Foster set up a touring company. After drama school, the company needed a home. "I discovered the Old Rep and persuaded the City Council to let me in."

Why an actor-manager? "My ambitions are simple, but they are very difficult to achieve. I just want to be in good plays with good people. It's a terrible profession I'm in: being an actor, you have no control over your career. If you have specific goals, such as working," he laughs, "you have to do it any way you can. Also, normally when you are in a play, there is a sense of a void afterwards. Whereas as an actor-manager there's an enormous feeling of achievement."

How ambitious is he? "If I ended up at the Old Rep for the next 30 years, that's fine as long as I am able to do what I want to do. I suppose you could say that I'm determined."

KATE BASSETT

Stravinsky Staged

Saturday 6 May 1995

The Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, regrets that the mixed programme to be given by The Royal Ballet this evening has had to be cancelled.



Patrons will be entitled to a full refund and should contact the Box Office on 01753 304 4000 for further information.

BILLY BUDD

BRITTEN



NEW PRODUCTION



THE SUNDAY TIMES

Value three antiques to win £1,000

Everyone enjoys trying to guess the value of rare collectibles. Play the antiques game in The Sunday Times and your skill could land you a cash prize. Study three auction items selected and described by Hilary Kay — a director of Sotheby's and one of the experts on television's Antiques Roadshow. Estimate how much the items sold for then simply phone in your answer and you could be on target for a £1,000 prize. See the Style section — The Sunday Times tomorrow



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For those of you who have never enjoyed the pleasure of owning a Mark XI, we are pleased to announce a worthy successor.

The Mark XII is a marriage of classic design and modern watchmaking technology. Like its predecessor it has that soft iron inner case, making it virtually impervious to magnetic fields. Inside, there is the superb 884 calibre automatic movement, adjusted in five positions.

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The Mark XII £2,300

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ARTS

Come to the playground

Helen Gould finds plenty of topical issues being tackled at this week's Festival of Theatre for Young People

Performing a play called *Sex Acts* with 16-year-olds is guaranteed to grab attention, and it certainly did at a school gymnasium in North London. A gang of youths burst through the doors with high expectations, and were a little disappointed to find London Bubble Theatre Company holding forth on the issue of safe sex.

But such is the pulling power, these days, of educational drama. Teachers have scrambled just as eagerly — though perhaps with less illibidinous expectations — to watch the first London Festival of Theatre for Children and Young People this week. Tickets for all four days of workshops and shows at the Oval House in Kennington sold out two weeks ago. But this is far more than a peep show of extra-curricular activities in school gymsnasia. For teachers, it is a chance to see before they buy. For artists, it is an opportunity to compare notes and approaches in what has become a highly specialised field.

Each year in Britain, more than a million youngsters aged between three and 21 watch performances by about 300 companies. *Sex Acts* is one outstanding illustration of how this kind of work is influencing a new generation. Like racism, drugs and the environment, sex education is currently one of the "buzz" issues that gets bums on seats. The story is nothing if not issue-based. Selma is 16 and pregnant. Should she have an abortion, as her mum suggests, or keep the baby as her boyfriend wishes? Paul discovers his ex-girlfriend has HIV. Is he infected, and should he confess to his new girl? Using forum-theatre techniques, London Bubble encourages its audience to step into the characters' shoes and resolve these dilemmas. No wonder kids love it. It's like asking them to write and perform *Brookside*. It leads to some magic moments too. "One actor has to come in with a bunch of flowers. Although we tell the students to respond to the performers non-violently, he frequently gets hit over the head with them," says the director, Sally Goldsworthy. "We were doing it in a health clinic the day after Valentine's Day," she recalls. "There was a girl of 14 or 15 with a tiny baby. You could see her tension mounting as Selma's boyfriend walked out on her. When we asked her to step in, she said: 'No, but that's my story.'"

Safe sex and social realism have not forced Shakespeare off the scene, however. The Bard has simply been changed with the times, to make it more accessible to an audience better acquainted with Harrison Ford than *Hamlet*. One example of how: in West 28th Street's *Macbeth*, at Oval House, the eponymous murderer sports a baseball hat and carries a ghetto-blaster. No longer is Shakespeare just for GCSE students. Companies such as Buntin Theatre are increasingly performing his works in primary schools. It may not be long before we see Shakespeare at the under-fives: toddlers are a rapidly growing market sector. "People used to think that



The Pop-Up group with the stamp issued to mark the popularity of children's drama

these children didn't even know which end of the room to look at, yet alone watch theatre," says Tim Webb, artistic director of Oily Cart, a leader in the pre-school drama field. "We started working with them and found that they can take more than fluffy bunnies." Fun though they are, for many youngsters these shows are an experience which long outlives the duration of the performance. They are a first taste of live theatre. They often become a focus of the school term and a platform for course work. For some they may be the only outlet for self-expression, too.

As part of the festival, Oily Cart is staging a two-day residency at the Shelley School, a south London centre for children with severe learning difficulties. Participatory sessions are designed to stimulate the senses. Aromas will be waved under young noses, fans and feathers will tickle, and pupils will be rocked gently to music. As a measure of the growing popularity of children's theatre, the Royal Mail has recently issued stamps featuring one company, Pop-Up Theatre. Two more festivals are planned this year, in Barrow-in-Furness and Harlepool. But until recently the picture had not looked so rosy. "The radical changes in education over the past ten years have threatened work between professional artists and schools," explains Sarah Argent, director of the Association of Professional Theatre for Children and Young People. For the 300 companies that remain, this Festival marks an upturn in their fortunes and a public celebration of survival.

New Wave is just like the old days

specialises in original approaches to sound reproduction, always interesting even when not convincing. The Wave is particularly impressive. Its design is neatly contemporary, a smallish wedge, 14 inches across and 4.5 inches high. Its wide front has a control panel runs across the top to the vented rear which contains the aerial, power and sockets for other equipment. The effect is pleasantly unobtrusive. The real surprise comes when you turn it on.

The sound that emerges has the expansive presence of the old days, coupled with thoroughly modern dynamic range and clarity. It seems improbable that such a tiny box can yield such full tones, using only two 2.5

inch speakers. The secret is the waveguide for which it is named, an acoustic labyrinth similar to those used in some hi-fi speakers. This is folded inside the case behind the right-hand speaker, capturing and reverberating the sound. The upper ranges are also clear and forward, and you can turn the volume surprisingly high before any serious distortion becomes noticeable. On sustained listening one notices how carefully the sound has been "tailored", sounding dry and boxy occasionally, but this is judging it by the highest standards. On two of the most demanding tests for any hi-fi, the male speaking voice and the solo piano, the natural sound was quite enough to delight most listeners. A portable CD player (or any other good

sound source) can be connected to those rear sockets. The controls allow you to set six preset stations and two alarm times. Best of all, the controls are reproduced on a remote control the size of a credit card and not much thicker. This is a model of clear and easy operation that shames most others, as is the instruction book. It has to be said that the Wave would gain from using a better FM aerial than the dinky little dipole wire supplied (the power cable doubles as another). The excellent sound mercilessly exposes signal hiss and interference, and also the way the signals of some broadcasts are compressed to suit car radios.

Bose sell the Wave only through their mail-order advertisements, which offer a fortnight's home trial without mentioning the price. Evidently they believe that once awakened by the Wave's dulcet tones, you will pay a swingeing £330 rather than part with it. Personally, I feel that even for this original little jewel the price is too high — and it is higher than the American price.

MICHAEL SCOTT ROHAN

The WH Smith featured CD

Claude Debussy has been called the musical equivalent of Monet, the pioneering impressionist painter. In the early part of this century, Debussy turned his back on German romanticism and gave the world a fresher, more colourful musical palette — just as Monet, Renoir, Seurat and Pissarro overturned the conventions of painting.

Some of Debussy's finest compositions for the piano are featured on this week's CD. Take the coupon below to a WH Smith music counter and you can obtain it at a £3 saving on the normal price of £13.99. Offer valid until May 27, 1995.

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WEST END ENTERTAINMENT

THEATRE GUIDE

Jeremy Kingston's assessment of theatre showing in London

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IF THE PLAY'S NOT THE THING, THERE'S DANCE TOO

LONDON

Strand Theatre

May 21

● SYLVIA SIMS and Jenny Agutter in *Mothers and Daughters*, an acute look at the parent-child relationship. Tickets £9.50 (normally £12.50). Tel 0171-930 8800

Bush Theatre

May 10-June 3

● TICKETS £6 (normally £9.50) to see *True Lines*, an electrifying journey around the world. Tel 0181-743 3388

Tricycle Theatre

May 9-12

● JENNY McLEOD's *Victor and the Ladies* is a hilarious sex comedy. Tickets £3.75 (Mon-Wed normally £7.50; £4.75 Thurs, Fri (normally £9.50).

ARTS

7

RECORDINGS: Hard-edged guitar sounds; an industrial earful and an epic baroque opera

JAZZ

Clive Davis

ERROLL GARNER
Magician!
Gershwin and Kern
Tel-Archive CD-8337***
A PLAYFUL double serving of Garneriana from the 1970s, the second instalment of reissues from the pianist's Octave label. *Magician* is the more erratic of the pair — it gets better every time. It is punchy original blues, but the treatment of the modern pop tunes *I Only Have Eyes For You* and *Close to You* veers towards the lush and formulaic, especially with the insistent Latin percussion lurking in the background. *Gershwin and Kern* come off better in a fascinating display of melodic legerdemain, most of the fun and games concentrated in the impromptu prologues to the main themes.

DIANA KRALL
Only Trust Your Heart
GRP Records 98102***
THE lady will go far. GRP, you will recall, is the company that foisted the brassy Diane Schuur on an unsuspecting world. Superficially at least, the Canadian singer Diana Krall comes out of the same school, combining blue-eyed soul with a sleek line in piano accompaniment. But where Schuur slips so predictably into vocal histrionics, Krall is a much cooler and more sophisticated talent: like Rickie Lee Jones or her acknowledged favourite Carmen McRae, she smoulders. The pianist Jimmy Rowles has acted as her mentor, which is the highest possible recommendation. Her flawless choice of songs (*Broadway, I've Got The World On A String*) and the guest appearance by the soulful tenor saxophone of Stanley Turrentine thrive on Tommy LiPuma's crisp, uncluttered production values.

deeply perverse album have been dashed, and the listener will either find himself being sucked into an eerie vortex of madness and despair, or reaching for the eject button. Those who persevere will discover that the brooding sense of melodrama only increases, through numbers which include *Manhattan* (featuring Brian Gascoine thundering away on the church organ of the Methodist Central Hall), *Bolivia 95* and the title track, which features a scorched-earth guitar solo by David Rhodes, a sonic assault which sounds almost conventional in this context.



Walker: surreal cacophony

David Sinclair

THE RAKE'S PROGRESS
Cheese Food Prostate
Aimo Sounds ALMO 001***
THE Rake's Progress come from New York where they have been scuffling around the East Village college circuit for five years. But their hard-edged guitar-pop sound and neatly clipped songs such as *We're So Cool* and *I'll Talk My Way Out Of This One*, suggest a band well equipped to make common cause with the bright young guns on the British scene.

Despite its useless artwork and tacky title, *Cheese Food Prostate* is a promising debut which scores points for its perky attitude and the sheer variety of songs — from the light, funky riff of *Project Me* to the belting, four-on-the-beat of *Along Came Mary*. The Rake's Progress, incidentally, start their British tour on Tuesday at the Borderline, London WC2 (0171-734 2095).

John Higgins

NICOLA
The Merry Wives of Windsor
Donath/Ahnsj/Brendel/
Ridderbusch/Bavarian Radio
Symphony Orchestra/
Kubelik
Decca 443 669-2 (2 CDs)***
A WELCOME back to the CD catalogue for *The Merry Wives*. It is needed there not least because our leading opera companies continue to steer clear of it, frightened, presumably, of unfavourable comparisons with Verdi's *Falstaff*. But Nicola's comedy needs to be known beyond its overture. Its jollity may be a bit Germanic, with Falstaff more of a Baron Cohn than an English gent, yet it is compact and fast-moving. Properly, it reaches its climax in the final Windsor Forest scene which provided most of the material for that overture.

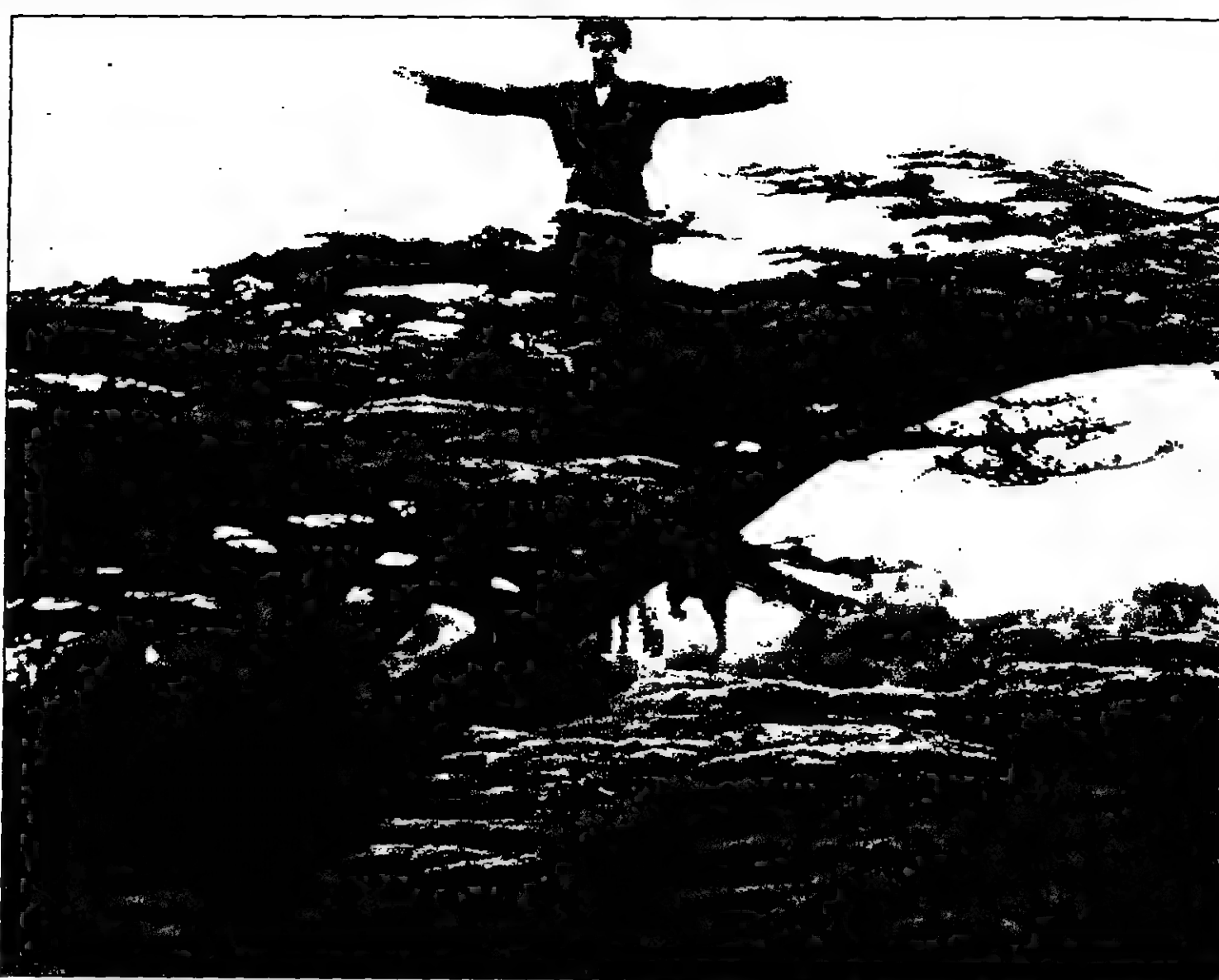
NEW ON VIDEO: Michael Austin's lavish period piece, two Hitchcock shorts and a slice of Italian life

PRINCESS CARABOO
Entertainment, 18, 1994
IS Phoebe Cates' enigmatic young lady — all regal smiles, haughty flourishes and bizarre foreign words — a true princess from a Far Eastern island? Or is she an imaginative imposter? Since the question is never hard to answer, Michael Austin's lavishly appointed soufflé, based on a true story of 1817, contains little drama. But lively performances, droll dialogue and exotic costumes provide many incidental pleasures. The extravagant cast includes Jim Broadbent (very funny), Kevin Kline, Wendy Hughes and John Lithgow. Available to rent.

DEAR DIARY
Artificial Eye, 15, 1994
REFRESHING, free-wheeling journal on film from actor-writer-director Nanni Moretti. In the first part, he rides around Rome on his scooter, musing on the city, his childhood and cinema; in the second, he hops islands, searching for quiet. In the third, darker section, he undergoes chemotherapy. Not very moment works, but there is a genuine charm to Moretti's wry comments on life and its imperfections.

HITCHCOCK AT WAR
Academy, PG, 1944
THESE two French-language shorts are footnotes to Hitchcock's career, though their curio value is considerable. Made for the Ministry of Information, their aim was to encourage the Resistance movement in France and her colonies. *Bon Voyage*, the more interesting of the pair, traces the zigzag route of an escaped RAF air-gunner from his German prison camp to London. *Aventure Malgache* documents the formation of a Resistance group in Madagascar. The Hitch of the famous thrillers pokes through from time to time.

PATTON
Fox, PG, 1969
ASKED for his opinion on Morocco, General Patton remarks, "I love it. Excellency. It's a combination of the Bible and Hollywood." So, in a way, is Patton himself. George C. Scott's barnstorming manner found a perfect outlet in Franklin Schaffner's biography of this controversial gen-



Phoebe Cates is an exotic and enigmatic character from the Far East, but is she the Princess Caraboo, or an imaginative imposter?

eral of the Second World War. The film's size suggests an ordinary epic but Scott's performance, the clever script and Schaffner's sharp eye turn it into an exceptional, intelligent drama. Available in a widescreen print.

THREE COLOURS: RED
Artificial Eye, 15, 1994
KRZYSZTOF KIESLOWSKI ends

his colour trilogy, and supposedly his film career, with a compelling jigsaw puzzle showing how the lives of two students and a retired judge in Geneva intersect. Every shot quivers with meaning, pushing the characters towards their destinies. If Kieslovski's style seems over-dry at times, the performances of Irene Jacob and Jean-Louis Trintignant as the warring student and the judge

whose relationship mellow into affection give the film a strong emotional core.

VANYA ON 42ND STREET
Artificial Eye, U, 1994
ADAPTED by David Mamet, *Uncle Vanya* is enacted in street clothes in the crumbling remains of the New Amsterdam Theatre, New York, a potent metaphor for Chekhov's

theme of lives in decay. Wallace Shawn's squawks as the indolent Vanya prove tiresome at times, although he never shatters the balance and precision of the fine cast gathered by stage guru André Gregory. Under Louis Malle's restrained direction, cinema meets theatre in a rare embrace.

GEOFF BROWN

POP ALBUM

David Sinclair

SCOTT WALKER
TIN
Fontana 526 859***
SCOTT Walker's first album in 11 years is a shocker. At a time when popular taste has broadened to accommodate all kinds of "difficult" artists and apparently outé musical styles, who would have thought it would take an old heart-throb from the Sixties to demonstrate what individuality of expression is really all about?

With his voice set against a stark, semi-orchestral arrangement on the opening track, *Farmer In The City*, Walker, who once studied the mysteries of Gregorian chant, sounds like a medieval monk singing a canticle. Although it is the most accessible of the nine songs (all written by Walker), the number is both unforgettably severe and gripped by a morbid chill.

The Cockfighter, which follows, is a truly nightmarish piece of work. Propelled by cacophonous bursts of clanking, industrial noise, its typically surreal lyric juxtaposes images of beauty with a dark hint of some vile unpleasantness. By this point, however, any lingering hopes of hearing a conventional tune — let alone a chorus — on this

album are dashed, and the listener will either find himself being sucked into an eerie vortex of madness and despair, or reaching for the eject button. Those who persevere will discover that the brooding sense of melodrama only increases, through numbers which include *Manhattan* (featuring Brian Gascoine thundering away on the church organ of the Methodist Central Hall), *Bolivia 95* and the title track, which features a scorched-earth guitar solo by David Rhodes, a sonic assault which sounds almost conventional in this context.

For a time EMI's classic version, led by Gottlob Frick as Falstaff and Fritz Wunderlich as Fenton, was available on CD, but that has long gone. Decca's version can feel no such stars but its cast, drawn mainly from regulars at the Bavarian State Opera at the time of the recording (1977), is very respectable. Falstaff makes his first entry in a blaze of brass and Karl Ridderbusch's cavernous bass responds in kind. He suffers Falstaff's indignities with good humour, including a second non-Verdian visit to the Ford house, where he has to escape like Toad of Toad Hall dressed as a old woman. A mid-price issue.

GOUNOD
Faust
De los Angeles/Gedda/
Borthayre/Christoff/Paris
Opera Orchestra/Cuytens
EMI CMS 5 65256-2 (3 CDs)***
A CURIOSITY. In the 1950s, EMI allowed itself the luxury of two recordings of *Faust* using the same conductor (Cuytens) and the same trio of principals — de los Angeles, Gedda and Christoff. The second for a time became a favourite in the catalogue, but this is a reissue of the lesser-known first version. Much of its quality is due to the disarming and consistently fluent Marguerite of de los Angeles, who has no trouble at all with the glitter of the *Jewel*

Song. Gedda, who had not even made his Paris debut at the time of the recording (1953), sounds almost impossibly young as Faust, but the promise is very audible in his Act III cavatina.

Two of the best contributions come from Jean Borthayre (Valentin) and Martha Angelici (Siebel), who were replaced in the second recording. Cuytens's conducting is assured, if not inspiring. Sound quality: moderate.

Hilary Finch

FAURE
Complete Works for Cello
Isserlis/Devoyon
RCA 09026 68099 2***
WITH celebrations of Faure's 150th anniversary going strong in Manchester and London, Steven Isserlis's new disc of the composer's complete Cello Music is nicely timed. What is more, the



Isserlis: Good timing

works for cello straddle the turn of the century when Faure's best-known music was first written.

They look back to the full-hearsed song of the 1890 *Elégie*, and the popular *Schizandre* of 1893, played with winsome nonchalance by Isserlis and pianist Pascal Devoyon. And they look forward to the two great Cello Sonatas: the war-haunted First of 1917, dislocated of rhythm and uncertain of harmonic reference, and the Second, written in his seventies.

The recital is framed by two versions of the *Romanesque*: the humming salon piece of 1894, and the first recording of its original version for cello and

organ (Francis Grier). In between come Isserlis's airborne performances of the little *Pavillon*, and the tiny *Allargo Moderato* for two Cellos (with David Wateman).

STRAUSS/MAHLER/SCRIBITTKE
Piano Quartets
Gothan/Lubovsky/
Hirvikkangas/Rousi
Ondine Ode 840-2***
TWO useful miniatures from two grandmasters of the mega-work. Both Richard Strauss and Gustav Mahler wrote Brahmsian piano quartets as students (they both later regretted it), and this quartet of one Russian and three Finnish musicians gives both a passionate advocacy.

Strauss's C minor Op 13 is in the best tradition of steamy late romantic chamber music, with fascinating little glimpses, in a solo violin phrase here or a harmonic turn there, of operatic things to come. Mahler's unfinished A minor Piano Quartet is far harder for the innocent ear to identify.

CHARPENTIER
Médée
Hunt/Padmor/Deletré/
Zanetti/Salzmann/Les Arts
Florissants/Christie
Erato 4509-96558-2 (3 CDs)***
BY NOW one would hope that this epic work, composed in 1693, is firmly established as a great opera. As if to prove the point, William Christie and Les Arts Florissants have just released their second recording of the piece, a project which signifies their debut on the Erato label.

The performance is a wonder. The cast is headed by Lorraine Hunt, who gives a wholly unfettered account of the role of Médée, beguiling us with the rich, flexible qualities of her voice as well as through her powerful dramatic sensibilities. Mark Padmore is marvellous as the initially somewhat cocksure Jason, and Monique Zanetti gives an affecting account of the vulnerable Creusa. The playing is stylish and deft, while

Christie directs with his usual insight and love.

CAVALLI
La Calisto
Bayo/Lippi/Keenlyside/Pushet/
Concerto Vocale/Jacobs
Harmonia Mundi HMC
901515.7 (3 CDs)***
IN A sense René Jacobs's version of Cavalli's magic comedy *La Calisto*, composed in Venice in the early 1650s, does to the opera what Raymond Leppard's version did in the Seventies. It takes the bare bones — often just melody and bass line — which is all that the surviving score offers and clothes it in rich apparel. The effect is of a wondrous fantasy, but it differs from Leppard's invaluable version both in its stylisticness and in its theatrical spontaneity.

The singing and acting, given such freedom, are accordingly and wonderfully spirited. Brilliant.

Mahler's unfinished A minor Piano Quartet is far harder for the innocent ear to identify.

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ORCHESTRAL

Barry Millington

BRUCKNER
Symphony No 8
NDR SO/Wand
RCA Victor Red Seal 09026 68047 2 (2 CDs)***
THIS is the fifth in the priceless series of live recordings of Bruckner by Günter Wand with the NDR Symphony Orchestra (Hamburg). No one collecting the series is likely to be disappointed by this issue, which delivers a deeply considered, structurally convincing account of Bruckner's masterpiece, yet one of elemental force.

There is in fact a question mark over whether Bruckner's music was intended to have quite such a monumental feel: there is a strong possibility, according to some scholars, that we are experiencing Bruckner through a

filter of Nazi veneration. But Wand's conducting of other repertoire is marked by such weightiness, of course, and the integrity of his reading just about puts such considerations out of mind.

LISZT
Piano Concertos Nos 1&2;
Les préludes, Maseppa
Orchestre de la Suisse
Romande/Järvi
Chandos CHAN 9360***
THERE are a good number of mood changes to be negotiated in both works, and it is the strength of the performance from pianist Geoffrey Tozer that display is only one element: they are also faithful to shifting emotional states. The fillers are a couple of symphonic poems — *Les préludes* and *Maseppa* — both significant works in their own right. Given admirable performances, they make up an attractive disc for Liszt enthusiasts.

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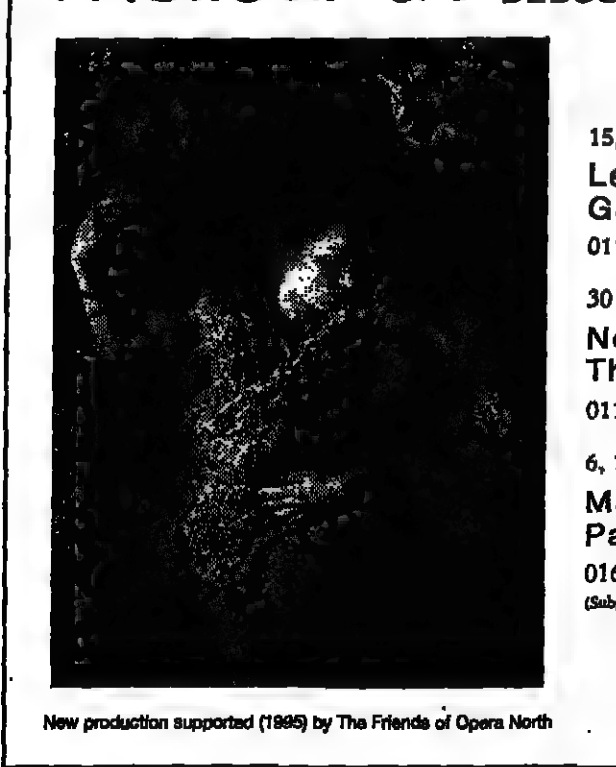
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pelléas and mélisande DEBUSSY



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GARDENING

A cave man with a modern accent is giving gardens an unusual and attractive highlight

Grottoes made simple

Too many people, the word "grotto" evokes the image of a hidden, cave-like place — amorphous, organic, blending into the landscape. Many grottoes in Britain are like this, some designed in the 18th century when the "natural" landscape movement was at its most fashionable.

This was not the only style, however. There were also formal, architectural grottoes or nymphaeums; classical structures owing more to inspiration of the Roman architect Vitruvius than the influence of nature.

Such structures were part of the concept of the garden as theatre, an idea which George Carter, a Norfolk-based garden designer and grotto maker, follows. He combines the historical with the pragmatic, and has designed 16th-century knot gardens and 18th-century parterres in kit

staged there, with special effects, music and poetry.

Although in aqueous terms Mr Carter might not go as far as Bushell, he is experimenting with 20th-century technology to recreate some of the more splashy effects of the past. For example, in front of the Barham Manor grotto he has installed some Bushell-esque hidden water jets, which deliver spectacular, shimmering crescents of water, based on the simplest of systems. "The jets were made with ordinary agricultural machines normally used for irrigating fields. Used in the garden, the base structure can be hidden by plants, and the sweep, size and timing of the water can be adjusted at will, introducing the unexpected and the random."

Another Bushell-esque effect with which Mr Carter is experimenting uses pierced, drip-feed hose. "Instead of having the hose on the ground dribbling water into the soil," he says, "you can hide it somewhere in the grotto — above the entrance, perhaps — so that it produces a soft curtain of rain from an unseen source."



George Carter's plywood grotto

He has also designed imaginative structures, such as the classical grotto he built at Barham Manor in Suffolk, for Charles Fenwick of the Chelsea Gardener store in London, and the miniature one for his brother's garden at Isley Walton Manor in Leicestershire.

Concrete motifs colour the rest of his design work. The fountain at Pallant House in Chichester, West Sussex, is ornamented with frostwork and undulating ribbons of lead which, like streams of water, trickle down the sides of a garden pavilion.

Water is an integral element of the 17th-century grotto: it gushed from fantastical fountains and spouted from hidden jets to take innocent visitors unawares. Mr Carter is fascinated by the technology behind such special effects, and says that the grottoes of Italy and France were display cases for the ingenuity and innovation of Renaissance engineers, who invested enormous much technological effort into hydraulic aesthetic effects.

Such grottoes were not confined to the Continent. At Enstone in Oxfordshire, Thomas Bushell, Francis Bacon's eccentric secretary, built a grotto and water works where the effects included "Thunder and Lightning, Rain, Hail-showers, Drums beating... the Dead arising".

The Enstone marvels, as they were known, were pure theatre, and theatrical representations were

particularly in this country, is under-used, yet simple halogen spots cost about £5 and can be used with effect to highlight any particular features."

And why not use fireworks, as people did for 17th-century village fêtes? Outside the entrance to his brother's 7th by 5th grotto, made of flint set in a wooden surround, Mr Carter tried such pyrotechnics at a winter party. "I think fireworks should be used more often at night to pick out architecture and garden features," he says.

The basic design of a Carter grotto is always architectural in concept — "If they are just organic growths, they look a mess." This insistence on structure may have its roots in Mr Carter's training as a sculptor, though some of the materials he favours, such as concrete, are more building site than studio.

He likes the heavy textures and surfaces that can be achieved; for example, by flints set into the face of a concrete block. Mr Carter uses the blocks with the flints facing forwards, a look which evokes the rusticated



A grotto suggested by a cut-out arch backed by mirror glass and framing a frostwork urn in lead and plywood

banding on architectural grottoes. He also casts flints into curved blocks of concrete to make rounded niches and arches. Sometimes, he uses wooden poles with the bark still on, cut lengthways and nailed to the facade of a building, giving an instant rustic grotto effect.

Should all this construction sound too complicated, or expensive, Mr Carter also makes false grottoes ("garden faces"), which are flat-faced architectural frontispieces used to terminate vistas or hide an unfortunate view. Made of timber, or occasionally of masonry, they are trompe-l'oeil in relief.

"The more fanciful the design, the better," he says. "A nymphaeum, temple or triumphal arch can often be scaled down to good perspective effect." At Barham Manor, he built such a facade in front of a 4ft-deep wall niche.

Admirers of grottoes, he says, are those who do not think that gardens are essentially about plants, but who are interested in the architecture of the garden.

A grotto can be perceived as a building, he adds, and planning permission may be needed. "A timber structure, possibly categorised as a shed, might not require permission,

but a masonry grotto might — particularly if the main house is a listed building."

Mr Carter charges £800 to £1,000 to design and build a relatively simple grotto facade. And when you marry 17th-century theatricality with 20th-century technology, the possibilities are endless.

CAROLINE CLIFTON-MOGG

George Carter, Silverstone Farm, North Elmham, Norfolk NR20 5EX (01362 668130). Mr Carter's designs can also be seen at The Chelsea Gardener, 125, Sydney Street, London SW3.

GARDEN ANSWERS



STEPHEN ANDERTON replies to readers' letters

Q Our crocuses are established in grass beneath some apple trees where there is also a large number of dandelions. Can I safely rid the area of dandelions without damaging the crocuses? — Mrs G.M. McCrae, Ilfracombe, Devon.

A This is easily solved. Crocuses, like grasses, are unaffected by the normal selective hormone weedkillers used to remove broad-leaved weeds from turf. So your options are: 1, spray the whole area of grass with a selective turf weedkiller; 2, carefully spot-treat the individual dandelion crowns with four to five drops only of the less dangerous weedkiller, glyphosate; 3, kill the dandelions by putting a pinch of salt into the centre of each crown.

Or, 4, if there are not too many dandelions, dig them out. If the numbers are huge, the best approach might be to use a selective weedkiller first, but rather than following up with the inevitable second or third treatment for stubborn crowns, follow with spot-treatment of glyphosate.

However, are the dandelions so terrible in rough grass? Some Sri Lankan tourists I met last year were as reverential of our dandelion-filled hedgerows as we are of their orchids.

Q I have had my new garden for 12 months. Having removed old roses and shrubs, dug the soil over for six months and imported loads of manure last September, I now have a problem: there are celandines everywhere. How do I rid the beds of this weed? — Rhoda Kindell, Goudhurst, Kent.

A Did they arrive with the manure, I wonder? Probably not, in your case; it is too soon for seed to have flowered, and unlikely that there were tubers in the manure. Beware the celandine, all ye who covet those promising heaps of molehill soil on pasture land. They can be ridden with celandines. And once celandines are in the garden, they are difficult to remove.

If a bed is empty of plants, chemical sterilisation under polythene is the best option. But covering the beds with black polythene is not effective over

one season. Smaller infestations may be dug out and burned, taking care that none of that cluster of little white tubers falls back into the soil, for each one will grow into a new clump.

Celandines are susceptible to spraying with glyphosate, but you need to keep hard at them. However, in shrubberies, there are worse weeds than celandines, and a virtue can be made of necessity. They are attractive in flower, look wonderfully sunny and fresh with blue Scilla sardensis under shrubs, and disappear below ground by midsummer. The only drawbacks are that they die down rather shabbily, and get ineradicably everywhere else. Perfectionists will keep them to the wild garden only.

Q My garden is overrun with rabbits. Can you give me the names of some herbaceous plants which they do not like? — Gillian Chubb, Hailsham, East Sussex.

A Rabbits are noisy and daft, and there is nothing so attractive to them as something newly planted, even if they hate its taste.

The plants to try — those which in time will cease to be objects of curiosity and will be left alone to grow — include red-hot poker, ferns, irises, day-lilies, the hairier-leaved geraniums, pulmonarias, alchemilla, paeonies, butcher's broom, honesty, foxgloves, ajugas, most perennials, aconitums, Solomon's seal, and lily of the valley.

If there is a rule, it is that rabbits avoid the notoriously poisonous plants and dislike a coarse, hairy leaf. If you are a rabbit-hater, take comfort, if that is the word, in that myxomatosis, which usually is more apparent in late summer and autumn, is already to be seen in rabbit populations. This could be a result of the unusually mild winter.

Q Readers wishing to have gardening problems answered should write to: Garden Answers, The Times, 1 Pennington St, London E1 9XN. We regret that few personal answers can be given and that it may not be possible to deal with every request. Advice is offered without legal responsibility. The Times regrets that enclosures accompanying letters cannot be returned.

Gardens to visit this weekend

□ **Gardens near Southsea, Hampshire** (01703 400000).

Two and a half miles southeast of Beaulieu, via B354. Open mid-Feb to mid-Oct, 10am-5.30pm (dark if earlier). £4 (£4.50 peak season, weekends and Bank Holidays), children £3 (£3.50), OAPs £3.50 (Wed and 1 Nov £3).

The rhododendrons and azaleas that fill 300 acres of woodland gardens are one of the great annual displays. The garden was begun by Lionel de Rothschild in 1919 and its immediate development has been carried on by the family. Visitors will appreciate the scale on which the plants are arranged and grouped among fine ornamental trees and older oaks, cedars and unusual conifers. Rothschild's rhododendron 'Hawk' group, in particular 'Crest', are the best yellow-flowered rhododendrons ever raised. There is a beacon-light ceremony on VE-Day.

□ **Goodwin's Park, Canterbury, Kent** (01304 840107).

Five miles east of Canterbury, off A2 or A257 on to B2046. Open April-Oct 27, Mon, Wed, Thur, Fri, 10am-5pm (Sun Oct 15, 2pm-6pm). £2, children under 12, 30p.

I am naturally biased in favour of my parents' garden at the house where I was brought up. Early summer is always a rewarding time to visit. From the lawn on one side of the 18th-century house, the extensive restoration and new planting in the park beyond the garden can be enjoyed. On the other side, beyond the three compartments of the lawn, a well-tended path leads to a young tree avenue and the arboretum. Here, among the diverse collection of ornamental trees, the many flowering crabs (malus) are covered in pink, red and white blossom, with makers head fruiting in grass below. A path from the arboretum leads between immaculate beech and hornbeam hedges into the woodland garden, where different corners are a notable feature at this time of year. *Cornus nuttallii*, with large, pinkish-white flowers, is especially striking. Goodwin's is best known for the view along the three compartments of the 18th-century brick-walled garden to the tower of the village church at the end. Quantities of clematis, both different *C. montana* varieties and small-flowered *C. alpina*, cover large stretches of the

walls. Early-flowering summer shrubs and perennials are on in many of the borders and, in the furthest compartment the composition of long, central borders with immaculate fruit and vegetables is just taking on its burgeoning summer appearance.

□ **Achnacloch, Connell, by Oban, Argyll** (01631 710221).

Three miles east of Connell, off A85. Open April until Oct 29, 10am-6pm. £1, children free.

The 30-acre woodland garden was begun during the 1930s, taking advantage of spectacular views across Loch Eive up to the peak of Creach Beinn. Like many Scottish west-coast gardens, the sheltered position provides a microclimate in which spectacular flowering trees and shrubs thrive. Among the many rhododendrons is a fine collection of *R. triflorum* varieties, distinctive for their peeling bark and yellow flowers. There are brilliant red-flowered embolisms from Chile, more delicate white-flowered holerias from New Zealand, and a complete grove of Australian eucalyptus trees. Wood anemones and erythroniums are later followed by clumps of small native orchids.

□ **University of Liverpool Botanic Gardens, Ness, South Wirral** (0151 353 0123).

Off A540, between Neston and Burton. Open daily (except Christmas Day), Mar-Oct 9, 9.30am-dusk; Nov-Feb, 9.30am-4pm. £3.50, children £2.50.

The Ness gardens were a gift to the university in 1948 from the daughter of Arthur Bulley who, in 1898, established the garden and its outstanding collection of plants. Many of the originals were raised from seed collected by the plant hunters George Forrest and Frank Kingdon-Ward, some of whose trips Bulley sponsored. Sheltered belts of holm oak, poplars and Scots pine protect the 60 acres from Atlantic winds. There are rare rhododendrons and other unusual ornamental shrubs throughout the garden's undulating site. Like many of the best botanic gardens, the range of planting is impressively broad, with herbaceous borders and rose gardens, an extensive rock garden and glasshouses. On Monday there is a plant sale.

G.P.

How to give a small border a big break

George Plumptre, The Times Gardener, on early summer plants



George Plumptre and his daughter, Hermione, check over brunneras and blending pulmonarias

In the past fortnight my garden has started to look spruce. For a start, the lawn has cheered up, with the help of a fertiliser I applied about three weeks ago. It is a controlled-release fertiliser that feeds nitrogen into the grass over a period of weeks. It is recommended that you apply it through a wheeled spreader for even distribution, but I put it on by hand, and it worked perfectly.

The fertiliser, a 4lb box of Scotts Lawn Builder (made in America but widely available), costs just over £8, and is advertised to cover 120 square yards. It is not too late to apply some now.

A few hours spent barrowing leaf mould on to my borders has paid dividends, tidying up their appearance and keeping in moisture. Plants are emerging surrounded by a covering of mulch, which will stifle some weeds.

It is easy to be lulled into false confidence in the garden's appearance at this time of year. Fresh growth appearing all the time helps to make everything look fine. But the real test for a gardener is trying to ensure that you have done everything you can to maintain appearances for as long as possible through the summer and into autumn. A good mulch will help keep the drab and dusty look of July or August at bay.

Lately, I have been working on a small border along one wall of the house to make it look good in early summer. The border is about 3ft deep and 18ft long, with a brick edging along the front against a stone-paved path. During the winter, the border catches very little sun but from early April the sun is high enough to get above the buildings on both sides in the morning and late afternoon.

For the border, I have chosen individual plants that are in scale with its small, overall size, and to mix in ones that flower through late April and May with others that come into leaf at this time but

flower later. The mainstay of the plants are pulmonarias, the lungworts, one of the best group of early summer perennials. They are adaptable and will grow in a border, in woodland or on grassy banks. Some of mine have been in for a couple of years and have made clumps about 1ft across.

Most of the pulmonarias have small, soft pink, blue or mauve flowers, and their attraction is as combination of the flowers with strikingly silvery white, spotted or mottled leaves. After they have finished flowering, a summer growth of foliage appears.

Among a dozen or so lungworts, I have included one of the few with white flowers, *Pulmonaria officinalis* 'Sissinghurst White'. The flowers are offset by the spotted leaves being slightly darker green than usual. After a year or two, the plant forms into a strong clump.

More spreading in habit is *P. longifolia*, with long, narrow leaves beneath mauve-blue flowers, while *P. rubra* 'Redstart' has warm, coral-pink flowers.

WEEKEND TIPS

- Check regularly vigorous climbers, such as clematis, to ensure that they are tied firmly to their supports.
- Trees and shrubs planted last autumn/winter or this spring will need watering at least once a week, unless there is regular rain.
- Early flowering perennials, such as pulmonarias, should be trimmed after flowering to allow their mounds of new foliage to grow strongly.
- Hoe borders and the vegetable garden regularly to prevent weeds competing with growing plants.
- Many vegetables, including beetroot, carrots and French beans, can now be sown outside.

flowers. Rough-textured and hairy, the leaves are prone to look dry and ugly by the end of the summer, so last year I cut mine off in late July to reveal a mat of new growth below.

The narrower oval leaves of omphalodes do not have this problem, but it is usually best to pull off some old foliage from established plants in late summer, allowing new growth to appear.

The series of dome shapes which these plants form make a good combination, behind which the tall spiky leaves of iris planted along the border wall provide height and contrast. These will flower as the small plants are finishing and, with a selection of hardy geraniums, extend the border's flowering season into the summer.

When I started planting the border there were large empty spaces, and it was tempting to put in one or two large shrubs that would have filled it out immediately. But these would have unbalanced the scale, which works well. Given the limited size of each plant in the border, there are always spaces to put in additions, such as the delightful *Corydalis flexuosa*, with fern-like leaves and bright blue tubular and spurred flowers, which I have just planted.

GARDENING

9

With the use of cypress, privet, yew or box, hedges can be turned into attractive living garden architecture, says Stephen Anderton

Nine times out of ten, all anyone requires of a hedge is that it should be green and evenly cut: a piece of living garden architecture to divide one space from another. But the other one in ten hedges are those which can perhaps work a little harder, and be fun — castellated hedges, or rilly-polly hedges which look as if they have been squeezed from a gigantic tube; hedges which really are living sculpture more than architecture.

The traditional vertical profile for a hedge is a rectangle, just a few inches wider at the bottom to ensure that each face receives adequate light from top to bottom, and therefore stays green, dense and healthy. The top may be flat or round-shouldered.

But the horizontal profile of a hedge — the horizon it presents to the eye — can be as varied as you like, without any physical detriment to the hedge. The greatest change will be the work caused in clipping it. Fast-growing hedging plants, such as cypress and privet, can be given a new horizon in six months, while slower-growing subjects, such as yew, may take a few years to establish in the new shape. Once it is done, clipping takes not much longer than before, so long as you have a good eye. And, like topiary, there is great pleasure in watching the shapes take form and fill out. For more complicated or precise shapes, yew is hard to beat.



Topiary cat for a small garden

Easiest of all is a castellated top, the regular up-and-down of battlements, and it can work on a hedge of any height. Or, you may prefer just to raise the hedge height more substantially in a few places to form turrets or buttresses. For example, the curving turret tops on the hedge at Godinton Park in Kent echo the curved Dutch gables of the house.

For a vase, a statue or a seat. Or you might keep the whole hedge level at the top but move the ground line of the hedge shallowly in and out, to make a series of bays.

Just because a hedge is needed to stretch from A to B it does not necessarily have to go in a straight line.

Hedges running down a slope often have a runaway quality inappropriate to their mass, and this can be counteracted by stepping the profile, just as you might a solid wall. The steps can be square-ended or round-nosed, as you prefer.

You might wish to add finials to the hedge, a series of hemispheres sitting along its top. Or the finials might be separated from the body of the hedge on stalks, so that they float there, like urns.

There are endless shapes to choose from — cones, balls (a nice conceit on a sloping hedge), disks, pyramids — or, for the serious topiary enthusiast, running foxes, rabbits, squirrels, a Spitfire, the skyline of Manhattan.

Hedge profiles need not be confined to treatment at the top. Windows through a hedge can be a



Mix of pillar topiary and wrought iron

delightful feature, especially when arranged to give contrived glimpses into another part of the garden: the gardens at Cranborne Manor in Dorset have an excellent example of a "window" hedge. Imagine a series of windows,

looking down on to a sunken lawn, like the views between the pillars of a cloister. Unfortunately, windows are not easy to insert into an established hedge. If you cut a hole through most species, the sides of the hole never reclothe themselves sufficiently. Even yew, which is so good at producing new foliage from old wood, struggles to make a green top — a lintel — to a window. But purpose-grown windows, developed by training and clipping a window as the hedge grows to its final height, are a great success.

It is fun to take the idea further and fill the space with an ornate iron grille. In fact, the grille sits on legs within the hedge, and it can be a great help having a frame around which to make the window.

For those with a passion for bodily curves or cumulus clouds, hedges can be pruned into great rolling shapes, squeezed together to form a barrier. Low winter light will bring a most extraordinary variety of light and shade into such constructions. Once again, the ground line of the hedge can be as varied as the skyline, so parts can bulge forward



A squirrel makes this hedge

at ground level, by adding plants out of the main line of the hedge. This is almost shrubbery clipping. The whole hedge can even float if you wish, by making a "silted hedge" — one in which the stems are kept entirely free of foliage for the first few feet. Hidcote in Gloucestershire is famed for its silted hedges, and at Harewood House, near Leeds, silted hedges of hornbeam were put in last year. Unusual hedge profiles may be

highlighted by the introduction into the hedge of varying coloured foliage of the same or different species. Domes of golden yew (*Taxus baccata* 'Elegantissima') always makes a fine conclusion to a long run of green yew, or to flank a gateway in a hedge.

Deciduous hedges can be made in a series of vertical stripes, of golden privet, purple plum (*Prunus pissardi*) and green or purple beech. It is a shocking effect best used in modern, formal, enclosed gardens, rather than let loose on open spaces or (horror of horrors) the countryside. Contrivance as blatant as this, however, has to have a clear, hard-working reason for being there.

On the other hand, hedges which are made of a continuous mixture of species can be as discreet as a distance as they are interesting close to. The two colours of beech and holly together make a hedge which is almost as dense in winter as it is in summer.

In topiary, coloured foliage can be used to great effect when, for instance, a golden dome of box emerges crown-like from the centre of a cube of green box. It offers the same teasing pleasure in the unreal which is found in *rompe-tête* work. And it is so easy to make. Simply plant one golden box in the centre of a square of four green box, and train into shape. After four or five years you should see the effect of your work.

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Being the Teething Biscuits on the market and with such a long history they have become a household name. Henry & Campbells are now on TV programmes, for the product is a favourite in television in Corporation Street has been the product of the Pains Pains process, as well as previously been used in a pig in George & Milner.

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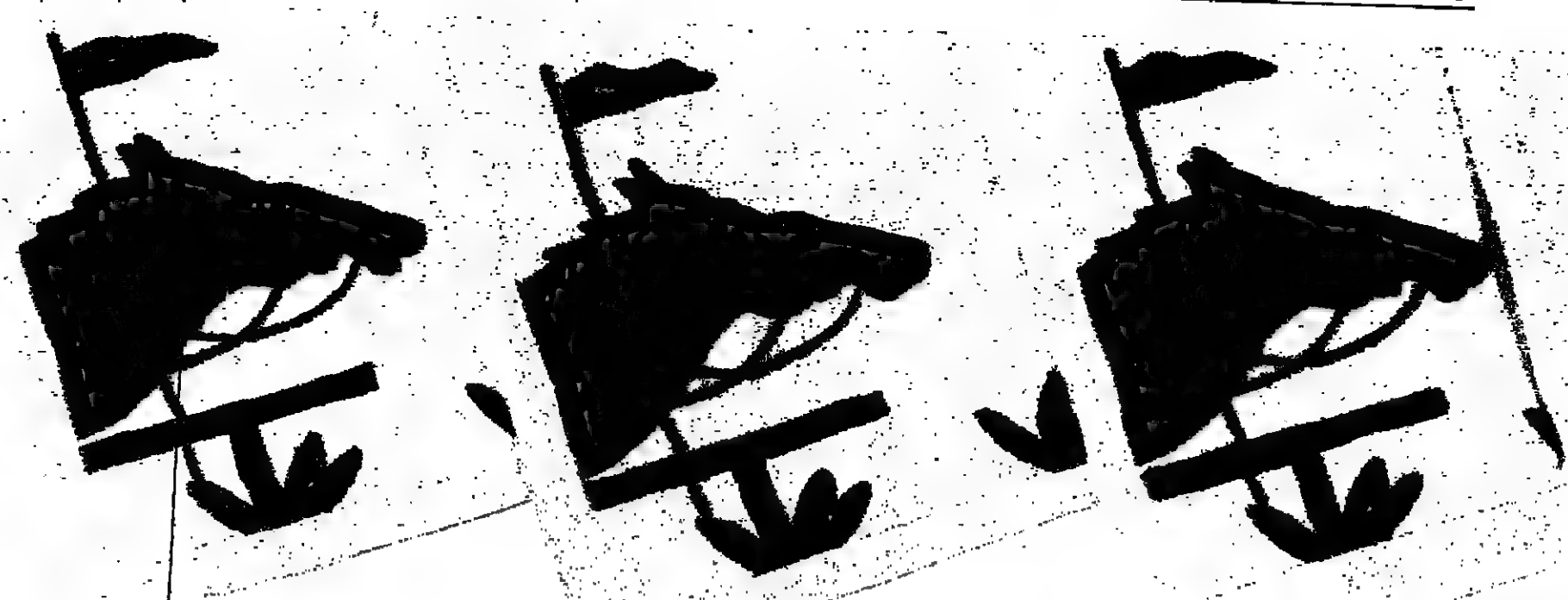
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WEEKEND SATURDAY MAY 6 1995

SHOPPING

11

Linen is blooming in vibrant colours and brings handsome rewards if treated carefully



Napkins, around £15 each, from the Linen Merchant

Linen to last you a lifetime

In southeastern Turkey in 1993 at Cayonu on the Upper Tigris river, a team of archaeologists unearthed a fragment of linen, about three inches by two inches. When it was carbon-dated, the fabric was found to be almost 9,000 years old. That is one tough swatch.

Linen is an ancient cloth that has become one of the fabrics of the decade. This season linen appears in almost every wardrobe and in every room in the house in hot pinks, deep purples and citrus yellows.

Some of the zingiest colours can be seen at the Designers Guild, where the Mahé range of sofa cushions (square £29 with pad; rectangular £26.50 with pad or fringe) have all-linen covers that close with a trio of ties. The colours include lemon, pumpkin, indigo, yacynth and Schiaparelli pink, which last appeared in the Kings Road in the 1960s. The Archipelago range of tablecloths (£159), napkins and table mats (£17.90 each), edged with raffia, are available in a variety of colours.



Linen-covered cushions, £26.50-£29, from the Mahé range at the Designers Guild



Left and right: the raffia-edged Archipelago range and a fringed cushion, £26.50, all from the Designers Guild

straightforward washing. "Never, never, never dry-clean household linen. It can't take the chemicals." To make sure that their own stock can stand up to her advice, Ms Masters rests items herself. "When we buy something new from a supplier, I take it home and give it grief."

"If you use a laundry, tell them what the stains are, and be sure to let them know the piece is of value," Mr Southward says. "The important thing is to get a stain out before you wash it. Linen can be washed in hot water with soap - no bleach or optical whiteners - and lightly tumble-dried or air dried, but you must iron it when it is still moist. The most common stain is red wine, which we soak out with clear alcohol, such as gin. Tea or coffee can be removed by pouring boiling water over the stained area. Greasy stains

should be washed with thick suds before laundering." Because linen can absorb twice its weight in moisture, it is ideal for bed and bath. The Linen Merchant stocks an unbleached damask dressing gown (£185) and unbleached Irish linen Turkish towels (from £5.95 for a bath mitt to £23.95 for a large towel).

The ultimate luxury is linen sheets (from £700 to £1,000 per pair). Mr Southward used Irish linen to demonstrate the "handle" of top-quality fabric. "This is the finest linen that is made. There are 1,400 threads per square inch - feel how smooth it is."

So the cardinal rules appear to be: soak for spills, use gentle detergents for dyed pieces, never bleach, air dry when possible, iron when damp on the wrong side, and, when in doubt, trust a professional. Follow these guidelines, and who knows, your linen might outlast you.

NANCY PATTON WOOD

The Culpeper shop supplies healthy, cruelty-free products

A blend of herbs and spices

WALKING into the Culpeper shop in Bruton Street in London's West End, you are first struck by the mingled aromas of hundreds of herbs and spices, and then welcomed by the sort of service whose demise we spend so much time lamenting these days.

The company was founded in 1927, basing its philosophy on Nicholas Culpeper, a 17th-century herbalist who believed in the healing power of herbs, pure food and moderate exercise. All Culpeper products are as natural as possible, and none has ever been tested on animals. When I commented on the deliciousness of the Elderflower Jelly (90p, £1.95), Mark Thomas - whose family now owns

give you the name of a qualified medical herbalist whom they have recommended for 30 years. The shops carry a vast range of medicinal herbs, from coltsfoot leaves (50g, £1.40) which, taken as a tea, is said to stimulate the immune system, to wild yam (50g, £3.75) which can be

Natural Plant Essences and Nut Oils. After reading the leaflets, put a few drops of Clary Sage Oil (4ml, £10.75) in the bath to discover what the word "relaxed" means (but not if you're pregnant); add invigorating peppermint (14ml, £4.60), rosemary (14ml, £3.50) and juniper (14ml, £4.45) oils if you're in the mood to party all night; or try a facial massage with frankincense oil (14ml, £17.95) to restore skin tone. Culpeper's range of foodstuffs includes sauces, honeys and spice blends for Indian and oriental dishes which are prepared exclusively by Pat Chapman of the Curry Club, each of which has a "chilli code" from one (very mild) to five

(fetch a fire extinguisher). Culpeper has plenty to offer if you are looking for gifts: herb-scented pillows; camp toys for cats; and a wide range of herbal teas, including peppermint (50g, £1.50), cowslip flower (50g, £1.95) and lime blossom (50g, £1.95).

STEPHANIE LEWIS
The Culpeper Shop, 21 Bruton Street, Berkeley Square, London W1 (0171-629 4539) and branches, plus mail order.



The shop is based on the philosophy of Thomas Culpeper, a 17th-century herbalist

Culpeper - said that he picked elderflowers for jelly-making purposes at home. No artificial colours, preservatives or "enhancers" are used in Culpeper food products. The packaging is simple and attractive, using biodegradable glass where practicable, and a free gift-wrapping service is available. If you're a devotee of herbal medicine, Culpeper should be your corner shop. The staff will not prescribe, but will look up any herb you care to mention, and

taken for bilious colic. There are 60 essential plant oils (full strength, undiluted) which can be used in aromatherapy and cooking; cosmetic nut oils; and aromatherapy massage oils diluted ready for use.

Don't buy essential oils without consulting Culpeper's free pamphlet *A Guide to the Safe Handling of Essential Oils* - they must be handled carefully - and you could also pick up a copy of *Aromatherapy and the Use of*



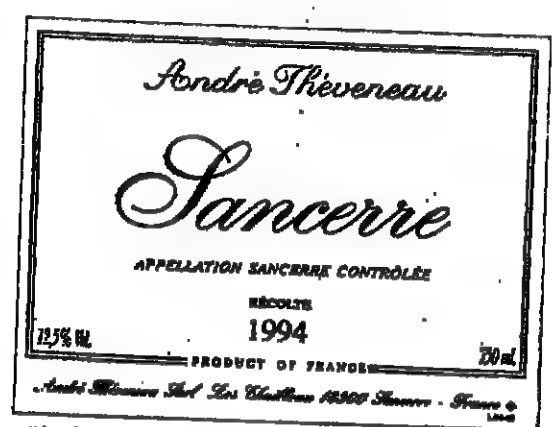
Moussie: Nordic Style

Where to buy

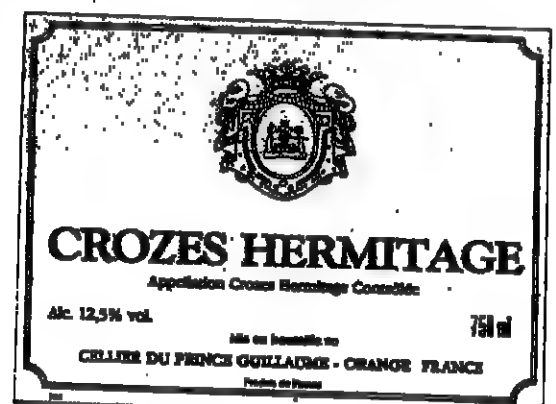
- Designers Guild, 277 Kings Road, London SW3 5EN (0171-243 7300).
- Moussie, 109 Walton Street, London SW3 (0171-581 8674).
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- KCP Upholstery Cleaners (0171-823 3532).
- Liberty, Regent Street, London W1R 6AH (0171-734 1234) and branches.
- Linen Fine, 22 Howe Street, Edinburgh EH3 (0131-225 6998); The Courtyard, Princes Square, Glasgow G1 3UX (0141-248 7082).
- The Linen Merchant, 11 Montpelier Street, London, SW7 1EX (0171-354 3654).
- Ulster Weavers has a factory shop in Belfast. Call 01232 329494 for details.



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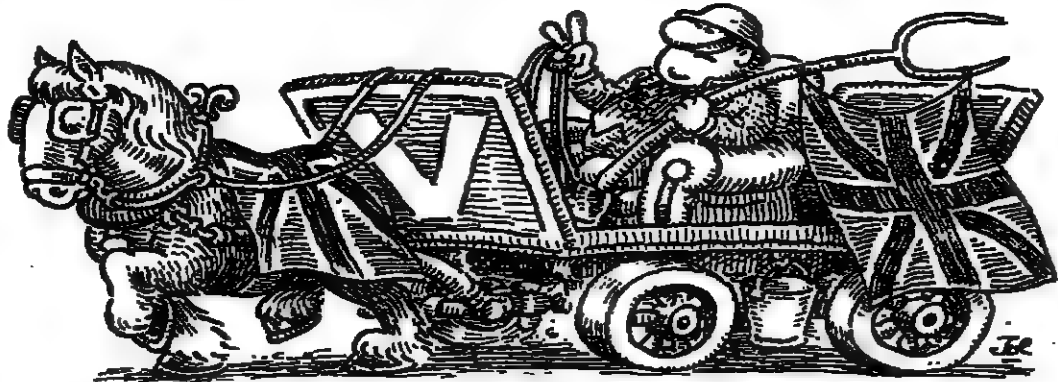
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The Victory Wagon rolls again



FARMER'S DIARY: PAUL HEINERY

During the Second World War, I imagine the sound of a distant rumble was a regular feature of farming life here on the East Anglian coast. It might have been the thunder of returning bombers, or the airfields' heavy armoury on the move. Fifty years on, this VE-Day, our village will again feel a single down its spine at an approaching rumble. But at least this one will pose no threat: it will only be me, a carhorse, and a rather special wagon.

The story goes like this. In 1945, in a village near here, a wheelwright, Billy Goddard, was putting the finishing touches to a fine farm wagon intended to cart corn and hay. He painted it blue and red (as was the custom hereabouts). The farm which had ordered the wagon employed girls from the Women's Land Army and, as he was finishing, two of them ran into the village bursting with the news that the war was over. Seeing the splendid wagon standing there, one said to Billy, "You ought to paint a 'V' on that, for Victory!" Out came the red and white paint, and the wagon was duly inscribed.

What happened to the wagon after that remains a mystery. All I

can tell you is that one day, five years ago when I was first farming, I was approached by our local butcher who said he had an old wagon standing in his front garden as an ornament, and would I care to make him an offer. I asked him why it had a big 'V' painted on the front and he said it was known locally as the "Victory Wagon", but he knew little more than that. It took some research, but I now know the story.

As part of the village VE-Day celebrations, I shall parade the Victory Wagon through the village behind Blue, one of our Suffolk Punches. I am not certain the late Mr Goddard would approve of the condition of the wheels, or the paintwork, but it is still roadworthy, I think.

All of which prompted me to blow the dust off a remarkable little booklet published by the Government in 1945 entitled *Land at War - The Official History of British Farming 1939-1945*. It is an inspirational work, not only

because of the evocative pictures, which confirm how common carhorses were on the land as recently as 1939; but because of the Churchillian nature of its prose. "No weapon ever invented is more deadly than hunger. It can spike guns, destroy courage, and break the will of resolute peoples... This is the story of Britain's battlefield -

the land: of how 300,000 farms, strongpoints in the battle against hunger, were armed... and helped to feed and sustain a nation at war." Enough to have anyone lashing a Union Jack to their pitchfork and heading for the fields.

I have no doubt that farming

during the Second World War was hell for some, but compared with the increasingly pointless nature of farming today, it must have been an inspirational time to work the land. The food was needed, vital for victory. The figures speak for themselves: six and a half million new acres of land brought into production during

the war, the production of essential wheat and barley doubled. As the booklet concludes: "Surely the gulf that hitherto existed between the two communities, town and country, could be bridged in no better way than this?"

Compare that with the lot of the farmer today who, far from being on the winning side, now finds himself directly in the sights of conservationists - determined to fight him on any front - of preservationists, politicians and anyone who wants to make a cheap joke at their expense. Farmers with any sense dig themselves a deep trench and keep their heads down. They can no longer console themselves with the knowledge that their produce is helping to win a war. Now, they are forced into accepting humiliating Euro-payments, increasingly structured to dissuade them from growing anything. They give farmers money now to plant trees, take land out of production, allow it to revert to the wild; anything but grow more food

for an overfed Europe. Fifty years ago, no one could have predicted how far the heroic farmers would have fallen in the public's estimation. Nor the scientific advances which made those millions of reclaimed acres more productive than any farmer could have imagined in his wildest dreams.

The result is that 50 years on, the countryside is again besieged by battles being fought by the birds, bees, flowers and trees, and the heavily armed agriculturalist with a formidable battery of chemical weapons and increasingly low morale in his heart. As any military man will tell you, it is a dangerous combination.

But it is high time the new war raging in the countryside came to an end. We desperately need all sides to negotiate a sensible peace, to bring an end to the bitterness which runs through every level of rural debate.

When the Victory Wagon rolls its iron-tired wheels down to the village hall on VE-Day, it will be to celebrate the peace and understanding which I hope will prevail in the next 50 years, as much as in celebration of the farming heroes of 50 years ago.



This 19th-century print shows some of the varieties of poultry being bred then. They include a buff cochin, light brahma, white silkie, white cochin, black Poland and silver-laced Poland. Right: One of Michael Carter's light brahmas

Swallows dive in for a spring feast

Feather Report

Swallows are back over the farmhouses and barns. They have come all the way from South Africa, but they time their arrival precisely. They appear in our skies just as the flying insects are emerging - all the hoverflies and houseflies, the winged aphids and midges.

This week the air has been full of such creatures. Even the starlings have been wheeling around in the sky trying to catch them. But the swallows are better adapted. They speed over the grass, their blue backs glinting in the sun, forever tilting to one side or the other as they take flies into their open beaks. Or they manoeuvre higher up, where the insects have been lifted in the air currents or blown against the side of a wood, and here they use the long streamers at the side of their tail like the most sensitive of rudders.

Just occasionally swallows take food while perching. They have been seen sitting on thistles, where insects had gathered, and once one was even seen robbing a spider's web of its struggling victims.

In the new international language of ornithology, we are now supposed to call them "barn swallows" - the name they have in America, where the swallows are the same species as ours. We may resent the new name, but it has to be admitted that it is apt enough.

Nearly all swallows nowadays nest in barns or similar outbuildings. They find a lodging above a rafter, and there they make their shallow nests of mud and feathers. In one barn that had some stages' horns nailed to the wall, an ingenious pair straddled its nest across the points of two of the prongs.



The swallows' backs glint blue in the sun

tumbling down into the kitchen below, sometimes with an owl in pursuit.

At the moment, some males are still waiting for the females to arrive. They perch on barn roofs or telephone wires to deliver their lively, twittering song, which generally ends with a disconcertingly harsh buzz or rattle.

They are not easily frightened, and from beneath one can study the fine chestnut face and throat, the dark blue band across the chest, and the pale underparts, which sometimes have a pink glow. The females are very like the males, but their colours are a shade duller, and their tail-streamers slightly shorter. Later, when the young are on the wing, they can easily be distinguished from their par-

ents, because they have practically no streamers at all.

Hungry again, the male bird on the wire drops elegantly off it and sweeps away, still singing. It may feed just above a river, flying into the wind and dropping down to pick insects off the surface of the water. Some males start tinkering with an old nest in their territory to make their offerings more attractive to a female, but once a couple has paired up, the female takes over the proper nest-building.

The pair may bring up as many as three broods in the course of the summer, and some swallows seem to linger on in autumn till the last insect has gone from the skies. Before they leave, they like to sit side by side twitting on the telephone wires. I have noticed that the juveniles also like to rest on flat-topped trees.

Being so dependent on aerial insects, they have a hard time finding food on migration if the weather is cold and wet in southern Europe, while drought in their winter quarters in South Africa can also mean death for some of them. Here, they have suffered from the disappearance of many of the tumbledown barns that suited them so well. But every May there are still a million of them flying gracefully over our heads - and there will be five million of them before they set out on their perilous journey to the south again.

DERWENT MAY

What's about Birders - Watch for sedge warblers now singing lustily from bushes in damp areas. Twickers - spotted sandpiper at Stoke Gabriel, Devon; lesser crested tern has returned to the Farne Islands, Northumberland; black-winged stilt is still at Titchwell, Norfolk. Details from Birdline 0891 700222. Calls cost 40p a minute cheap rate, 50p at all other times.

There are fashions in all things, even chickens. This, for instance, is the year of the larger hen. The result is that marans, welsummers and barnevelders are all the rage, and the Scots dumpy, down to a handful 20 years ago, is being sought after for the first time since Robert the Bruce decided its short legs made it ideal for carting about in baskets.

Never heard of these breeds, let alone know what they look like? You need to meet Michael Roberts, who has collected chickens since childhood. In 1975, Mr Roberts founded the Domestic Fowl Trust, at Honeybourne, near Evesham, Worcestershire, "because nobody else was doing anything to save the old, pure breeds that commercial farmers were ignoring". He now has more than 160 minority breeds, including the archetypal picture-book hen, the Buff Orpington.

"As a child, silkie from China were my favourite," he says. "Marco Polo, the first European to see them, described them as the only chickens he had known to have wool on their backs."

Mr Roberts' expertise takes him all over the world. He has just returned from his second visit to Russia, as adviser to the country's first domestic fowl trust, the St Petersburg Poultry Club, set up last August. The club members (householders, pensioners, amateurs and children) are restocking with the breeds that were dismissed as non-commercial when the collective farms started to be privatised and farmers began importing hens from Holland and America. He is also helping the club to raise funds in the West for incubators in which to hatch eggs.

Next year, Mr Roberts will return to Russia to help establish clubs around the country. With him will go five breeds of rare European chicken

Fact file

□ The Domestic Fowl Trust, Honeybourne Pastures, Evesham, Worcestershire WR11 5QJ (01386 833053). Open all year except Fridays, 10.30am-5pm. The trust sells 10,000-50m. Food and bedding costs about £180 a year. Birds need at least 8ft by 8ft to scratch about in.

□ Chickens at Home is available from the Domestic Fowl Trust at £5, plus £1 p&p.

□ The Poultry Club of Great Britain (01205 724080) advises its 1,800 members on care and conservation. Details from Mike Clark on 01205 724081.

□ A coop and equipment for about half dozen hens costs about £300 (six hens cost £29, more for fancy ones). Food and bedding costs about £180 a year. Birds need at least 8ft by 8ft to scratch about in.

□ Chickens at Home is available from the Domestic Fowl Trust at £5, plus £1 p&p.

For pullet surprises, apply here

As more chickens are being battery bred, one man is trying to preserve breeds of the past

particularly suited to harsh winters. He will bring back to Britain the eggs of three rare Russian breeds to extend his small breeding flock of white long-legged Orloffs.

Until the mid 19th century, poultry was used mainly for cock fighting," Mr Roberts says. "Then, as people moved into towns during the Industrial Revolution, they had to be fed, and that's when the birds began to be bred for food. There were only about ten varieties at that time, but farmers started to breed new varieties." Mr Roberts has eschewed charitable status for his trust, opting for independence, which allows him to make all the decisions. Sales of eight commercial breeds boost funds, though of the 20,000 eggs, chicks and adult fowl he sold last year more than a third were of rare breeds.

"Small hens are always in demand."

Mr Roberts says, "but recently I have had a lot of inquiries from people who have moved into the country and found themselves with a large garden or orchard which they want to fill with the bigger chickens. We quit new customers so that they get the birds that are best for them, and know how to look after them. The main questions are: 'How many eggs do you want?' and 'How fox-proof are you?'"

Not surprisingly, Mr Roberts is highly critical of battery farming. He says that, among other things, it denies hens the pleasure of dust baths, nest-building and sunbathing, when "they go spark out, with their legs and wings spread, and people think they're dead". He believes batteries could be banned in Britain, as they have been in Sweden and Switzerland, without cutting production or pushing up costs.

While we talked, a small, hyperac-



Mr Roberts with a partridge cochon

tive houdan brought in from central France jumped out of its pen and started causing havoc among the feather-footed Belgian biddies (*porcelaine barbu d'uccles*) next door. "He's an absolute pain," Mr Roberts said, chucking him back into his own pen. Clearly the houdan was unaware that hens never let the lack of a male interfere with their (albeit sterile) egg production. They also make less noise without a cock in their coop. On the other hand, "Ayoyomis, from Egypt, scream whenever you pick them up, making the neighbours wonder what on earth you are doing," he says.

Unwanted male chicks in his collection are killed at a day old and sold for owl and hawk food. Unwanted male adults are cooked and eaten, without qualm, by the trust's six staff.

It was the Romans who originally introduced different breeds of chicken to the European countries, but modern distribution in Spain is down to the trust. "The Spanish had eaten virtually all their village fowl during the Civil War. We have been delivering eggs to the Spanish Embassy in London, which sends them on in diplomatic bags to breeding farms run by the Spanish agricultural ministry, which in turn distributes them around the country."

Eastern breeds, such as the Indian brahmas and Chinese pekings, came to Europe on tea-clippers. Now they are going back on aeroplanes. The trust has exported to collectors in Japan, Africa, America, Canada and Scandinavia, and interest is spreading. We may never know which came first, the chicken or the egg, but we know that the first hen originated from the Malayan jungle fowl. Mr Roberts keeps a cock and four hens of this breed for historical interest, "but they are not popular as they tend to be flighty. People like friendly chickens."

JENNY MCCLEAN



Trays of chicks being hatched at the Domestic Fowl Trust

Who will win the £25,000 AT&T Non-Fiction Award? Below, two judges report; overleaf, the authors speak



The laptop computer the four short-listed authors will receive

Technical wizards hail literary winners

THE AT&T Non-Fiction Award? What's that? The answer is that it is the former NCR Non-Fiction Award under a new name.

The NCR, or National Cash Register Company, which started out more than 100 years ago by making tinkling tills for shop counters, and ended up making giant financial computers, was merged with American Telephone and Telegraph (AT&T) last year. AT&T might be described as great distributors of non-fiction themselves.

They make network equipment and computer systems, and their Worldwide Intelligence Network carries 160 million voice, data, video and facsimile messages every business day. They have continued to award the yearly non-fiction prize, but they have now rechristened it with their own name.

So what is it about? As the NCR Award, it was first given in 1988, and has gradually built up a distinguished name for itself, with

a £25,000 prize for the winner (£5,000 more than Booker prize winners get for their novels) and a dinner for the literati at the Savoy. Past winners have included Simon Schama's remarkable book on the French Revolution, *Citizens*, in 1990; *The Invisible Woman*, Claire Tomalin's book about Dickens's girlfriend, Ellen Ternan, in 1991; and Jung Chang's bestseller, *Wild Swans*, in 1992.

Last year the prize went to John Campbell's biography of Edward

Heath. All the four shortlisted candidates will this year receive an AT&T laptop multimedia computer, worth £2,500, to write their next book on.

The judges have had a lively time making their choices this year, as our interview with the chairman Alan Clark, and Val Hennessy's article, reveal.

They chose a long list of 12 books from the 115 submitted by publishers, then shortlisted four of those. The judges will announce the name

of this year's winner next Tuesday at the dinner at the Savoy in London.

Meanwhile, we shall have to get used to the name "AT&T" — not perhaps the most evocative name for a literary prize, but one that as the awards go on will no doubt come to acquire its own alluring associations for our biographers, historians and other purveyors of the Great Facts of Life.

DERWENT MAY

'They invited me hoping for controversy'

S jumped on his velvet sofa, in his medieval castle in front of a fireplace that could house a family of four. Alan Clark does not exhibit quiver with enthusiasm as he rises to the judging of the AT&T Non-Fiction Award. "Oh God," he whines, each vowel drawn out for maximum effect. "It has been a nightmare."

It's hard not to sympathise. Reading 115 books in ten weeks, most of which could doubt as work-out equipment for hot-potters, can't have been the greatest fun; at least not for a man as easily bored as Clark. So why did he agree to chair the judges? "I was curious to see how these awards operate — there have been some pretty funny results with the jokers — and for the chance of getting a lot of lovely books. Well, I thought I'd be lovely."

Clark is under no illusions as to why he was asked to be chairman. "They didn't put me in for my taste and discernment in this field," was put on the committee in the hope that there might be a ray. In invited commas, and that I might be controversial — in the time it takes for this word to come of you could go away, make a cup of tea and still be back to card the vibrations of the last syllable — and this would attract publicity to the whole affair. But of course I haven't been."

Well, that all depends who you mean by controversial. Much of the delight of Clark's *Diaries* came from his stomach-shrivelling swipes at enemies and friends. "Loathsome puffball" is a typical Clark epithet — reserved, in this case, for his much-esteemed colleague Tom King. Readers might well suspect that the former Tory minister was carrying it up for posterity — let me assure him, Clark is blissfully bitchy all the time and has the tolerance reserves of a Tudor monarch with gonorrhea.

No praise then for the standard of entry in Britain's most valuable book prize. "They didn't really hold

Julia Llewellyn Smith meets the chairman, Alan Clark — not the most shy and retiring of men

my attention. You can't choose what books you would like to judge, you're at the mercy of the publishers, and what they chose to send you. And no praise for some of the other judges, who frequently, in Clark's opinion, were backing books for reasons of style rather than content.

"These awards may or may not only have a vestigial connection with literary merit. I couldn't care less whether Martin Amis had his teeth fixed or not, but there are people who are very swayed by fashions in making their judgments. It's frightfully tough on serious writers, who don't play the fashionable game and who suffer from neglect."

Fashion can mean invogues, a category which Clark admits to belonging to. "When I started writing in my thirties, I collected 40 rejection slips before finally I got someone to publish my book. Now any publisher in the country would be delighted to publish a book by me. They will take one that I have dictated over the phone. Neither way can be right."

Or it can mean political correctness, a state which Val Hennessy, for all that Clark respects her, is pronounced guilty of. "Aristocrats by Stella Tillyard," he muses, peering at the long list. "Quite a good book but Val wouldn't have it." Why? It's a brilliant history of 18th-century England told through the lives of four upper-class sisters. "Exactly. None of them had to

make their own beds as it were." He grins slyly, my eyes dart round our baronial surroundings.

Other non-starters, as far as Clark was concerned, included a history of AIDS, *The End of Innocence* by Simon Garfield, which was backed vigorously by two judges. "Who wants another book about AIDS for God's sake?"

Still, there were chinks in Clark's armour. "We had to have the Mandela book [*Long Walk to Freedom*] on the shortlist, he is such a marvellous man, so I didn't care that it was a politically correct choice. The early part of the book, which he has clearly written himself, is impressive. "When he becomes a statesman he falls into the trap of political autobiography in which he wants to cover everything. De Gaulle was the only one who didn't do that, who realised that he didn't have to list every committee he ever chaired, name every lecturer who taught him at the Ecole Normale."

Long Walk will be a favourite for the prize. Clark may or may not be backing it: he is sulking because his favourite, *Louis MacNeice* by Jon Stallworthy, got knocked out in the last round of judging. To make it worse it was "blocked" by two other judges, a political trick which Clark had deployed in the previous round to destroy Garfield's book and also "to keep another book off the shortlist."

No wonder reports were leaked to the press of tantrums at the judging sessions. Clark, who has a thinner skin than one might suppose, is misled by press reports of cantankerous leadership. "This completely unrecognisable figure has emerged, frightfully crusty and pronouncing on everything. Most people complain that I drawl and I'm too laid back."

Certainly he is almost totally horizontal now, legs waving in the air, although it is fair to guess he made an effort for the meetings. "I just laid down ordinary common sense: all remarks to be addressed through the chairman, no one may



Alan Clark: "They didn't put me in for my taste and discernment in this field..."

speak while some one else is speaking otherwise you get all this chatter like a tone of voice could kill across to each other which makes a shambles."

This authoritarian spid is somewhat spoiled by the entrance of a large, lumbering dog. "You are not allowed in here, Hannah. Hannah sit. Hannah sit!" Hannah stands and glares at me balefully. "Fright-

fully sorry," says Clark, hair flopping over one eye in rakish confusion. "The dogs only obey Jane" — his wife — "you see." If his control over the committee is anything like his control over the dogs, then AT&T can expect any result on Tuesday. Meanwhile, Clark has his own work of non-fiction to fret about, a history of the Tory party from 1922 to 1990. His computer

will not print it out any more — every time he presses the print button it regurgitates his standard thank-you letter to fans of the *Diaries*.

And when he told a woman at a dinner party what he was working on, her reply was "Oh God! Give us a break!" When it comes to be judged, let's hope she has nothing to do with the AT&T committee.

Sorry, too boring. Gong!

Val Hennessy is weighed down by 115 'dry-as-dust' tomes but cheered up by the style of the wholly self-assured chairman



Val Hennessy feels judging is a happy, depressing, angry job.

mine, as it happens, and a book for which we both fought tooth and claw but which, alas, received the thumbs-down from our fellow judges) turned out to be Jon Stallworthy's *Louis MacNeice*. "Time was away and somewhere else..." Alan and I murmured sadly, in unison, quoting a favourite MacNeice poem as this excellent work was eventually consigned to the reject pile.

At our first meeting things got off to a shaky start with all the judges slightly overawed by our chairman. Things livened up when he announced that we must raise our hands for permission to speak and I told him not to be so bloody daft. From that moment everybody went into overdrive. Gushing enthusiasm or hoots of derision reverberated on all sides as books were long-listed or gonged.

The procedure went like this: Alan held up each book. Colin Thubron's *The Lost Heart of Asia*? Not up to his usual standard, too contrived. Gong! Marina Warner's *From the Beast to the Blonde*? Too heavy-going, read all that sort of thing years ago in *Spare Rib*. Gong! James Hunter's *A Dance Called America*? Will only appeal to a limited readership. Oh who is going to rush out and buy a book about starving Scottish Highlanders boarding slave ships bound for North America? Gong! Graham Robb's *Balzac*? Blinking boring. Gong! Kevin Logan's *Salazar and the Occult*? Loud laughter. Gong! Jonathan Dimbleby's *The Prince of Wales*? Even louder laughter and some vomiting noises. Gong! Edward Burman's *Supremely Abominable Crimes*? Do we really want to read a book packed full of sacrilege, sodomy and torture? Don't we get enough of

that at home? Speak for yourself, Alan. Gong! Stella Tillyard's *Aristocrats*? Cheers. Terrific. Couldn't put it down. Definitely one for the long list... Yes. It's a brutal process. It's insulting to authors. And it's why literary prizes are always, ultimately, hit-and-miss affairs involving soap decisions, idiosyncratic preferences and massive compromise.

Then there's the way your thoughts wander. Each time Alan opened his mouth, pontificating in those suave, Eton-educated, wholly self-assured, ruling-class tones, I kept picturing episodes from his infamous diaries. As he sat debating, for instance, the merits of John Lushington's *The Death of Politics*,

there flashed upon my inward eye images of Alan's much-publicised randy romps with a High Court judge's wife and her two young daughters.

As he expounded upon the extraordinary history of the Empire detailed in Patrick French's *Young-husband*, I suddenly recalled one of his diary entries that went: "Yesterday I travelled by train, and a plump lady came into my compartment at Waterloo. She was not wearing a bra, and her delightful globes bounced around prominently, but happily." Good grief, I was thinking, this man was once Mrs Thatcher's closest confidant. What a lech. Better keep one's globes under control when old Alan's

around. But then my reverie was shattered by things getting serious. Alan was brandishing Simon Garfield's *The End of Innocence* (a history of AIDS), throwing a minor wobble and roaring that it could not be a winner, and if it was it would be "over my dead body". Everyone started going at him hammer and tongs. Sheridan Morley and Ruth Leon banged the table with their fists.

I chipped in to say that much of Garfield's book went over my head. What, I asked, is "racking"? Alan belatedly: "Darmed good question. Val, what is 'racking'? And it took Ruth several minutes to enlighten us. The upshot was that *The End of Innocence* was gonged. We then all tucked into sandwiches (vegetarian ones for Alan) and I recalled how I used to go hop-picking each year on land near to the castle which Alan owns in Kent.

Afterwards the ladies retired to the powder room for some girl-talk and it was generally agreed that Alan has a certain *je ne sais quoi*. It was also agreed that it's not every day a woman finds herself knees under the table with a man whose personal wealth exceeds £40 million, who owns a castle, 27,000 acres of Scottish estate (no wonder James Hunter's *A Dance Called America* didn't grab him), farms in Wiltshire and Dorset and has a home in Switzerland, and knows what he's talking about when it comes to books.

Being a judge is an immense privilege. It can be exhilarating — as when Lucy Grealy's *In the Mind's Eye* (a brave, beautifully-written autobiographical account of a young life wrecked and reclaimed following jaw cancer) was long-listed, and dispiriting when a book that you particularly admire is rejected by fellow judges. No one

shared my enthusiasm for Patrick Wright's *The Village That Died For England* (a delightfully quirky history of abandoned Tyneham village in Dorset, and a statement about the futility of individual protest when pined against the government war machine), or Will Hutton's triumphantly polemical *The State We're In* (a passionate plea for British constitutional change and for City fat cats to foster home industry).

At first everyone turned glassy-eyed when I announced that Mark Hudson's *Coming Back Brokens* had almost blown my socks off. It didn't make the long-list until I pleaded for everyone to give it another read — please — and then it subsequently bounced off the ropes and back into the ring.

A judge feels guilty, too. As I did when two people raved about Antony Beevor's and Artemis Cooper's *Paris After The Liberation* and I confessed that one week after reading it the only detail I recalled was the way Paris beatniks of the 1960s avoided National Service by smoking three crushed aspirins in a cigarette an hour before their medical. No. Don't try it. I'm told it causes heart failure.

I am writing this shortly after the meeting to select our shortlist. Fists didn't exactly fly but Alan went into a sulk at one point and I began drumming my boot heels. It gets you like that — all the tension, conflicts of taste, personality clashes. "These things are always a bloody fiasco," chuckled Alan, buttoning up his Savile Row overcoat. We were standing outside the AT&T building, with the wind whipping along the Marylebone Road. "May the best man win, eh, Val," he grinned, with a debonair dance of the eyebrows. "Or woman, Alan." I replied, jumping into a taxi.

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SHORTLIST		
From the 115 books selected, the judges chose a long list of 12, and then a short list of four.		
SHORT LIST		
<i>The Brontës</i> By Juliet Barker Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £25		
<i>Leonard Bernstein</i> By Humphrey Burton Faber, £20; paperback £8.99		
<i>Coming Back Brokens</i> By Mark Hudson Cape, £16.99		
<i>Long Walk to Freedom</i> By Nelson Mandela Little, Brown, £20		
LONG LIST (Remaining eight books)		
<i>Paris After the Liberation</i> By Antony Beevor and Artemis Cooper Hamish Hamilton, £20 Penguin paperback, £8.99		
<i>Youngusband</i> By Patrick French HarperCollins, £20 paperback (in July) £7.99		
<i>In the Mind's Eye</i> By Lucy Grealy Century, £14.99 Arrow paperback, £7.99		
<i>Sweetkillough, Let Go Your Anchor</i> By Maurice Hayes Blackstaff Press paperback, £7.99		
<i>Emeric Pressburger</i> By Kevin Macdonald Faber, £20		
<i>Louis MacNeice</i> By Jon Stallworthy Faber, £20		
<i>Aristocrats</i> By Stella Tillyard Chatto & Windus £20 paperback, £8.99		
<i>The Village That Died For England</i> By Patrick Wright Cape, £17.99		

	WILLIAM HILL	RON POLLARD
<i>Long Walk to Freedom</i>	6-4	2-1
<i>The Brontës</i>	9-4	2-1
<i>Leonard Bernstein</i>	3-1	9-2
<i>Coming Back Brokens</i>	4-1	8-1

Ron Pollard, who first had the idea of betting on literary prizes, has compiled the odds for this occasion.

Alan Clark, the chairman, was formerly Conservative MP for Plymouth, Sutton, and Defence Minister from 1989 to 1992. His frank *Diaries* were published in 1993. Other books include *The Donkeys: A History of the BEEF and Barabossa: The Russo-German Conflict 1941-45*.

Julie Formby is a bookseller. She built up the paperback department at Hatchards, in Piccadilly, London. Since 1987 she has been manageress of the Pan Bookshop in the King's Road, London, which last year won the British Book Award for Best Independent Bookshop.

Val Hennessy has been the chief book reviewer of the *Daily Mail* for the past six years. In 1988 she published *A Little Light Fiction*, a collection of literary interviews.

Ruth Leon is a television producer and director, and is at present arts and entertainment editor for BBC Radio 5. She is the author of *Applause: New York's Guide to the Performing Arts*.

Sheridan Morley, a theatre and film critic who often appears on radio and television, is a presenter of *The Arts Programme* (Radio 2). His books include *Odd Man Out: The Life of James Mason*, *Katharine Hepburn and Audrey Hepburn*.



The authors' tales: a political life spent mainly in prison, Bernstein, the Brontës and the Durham miners

Smuggling Mandela's story

President Nelson Mandela is dismissive of news that his autobiography, *Long Walk to Freedom*, is nominated for a literary award. He told me: "One of the most puzzling things is why so many people throughout the world have a preference for very cheap literature. If I were you I wouldn't read that book." I told him that I had read it, and he scoffed that now I was probably just as criminal as he was.

More seriously, he is pleased and surprised by the book's sales, and is already at work on a second volume, making notes each day for a book about his time in government, which he will write after he retires in 1999.

The bulk of the autobiography was written surreptitiously on Robben Island, the windswept jail just off Cape Town. It was suggested by Mr Mandela's fellow prisoners, Ahmed Kathrada and Walter Sisulu, his long-time friends and colleagues, as a project to make the 60th birthday of the most famous political prisoner in the world a memorable event.

In the end it was not published until long past the author's 76th birthday. But when the idea was first mooted soon after he was 57, he threw himself enthusiastically into this new project, adopting an unorthodox work schedule. "I would write most of the night, and sleep during the day," he recalls. "During the first week or so, I would take a nap after dinner, wake at 10pm and then write until it was time for breakfast. After working at the quarry, I would then sleep until dinner."

After a few weeks of this, he told the authorities (not surprisingly perhaps) that he was not feeling well, and would decline to go to the quarry. "They did not seem to care, and from then on I was able to sleep most of the day."

The foolscap manuscript was edited by Kathrada and Sisulu, and then passed to another prisoner, Laloo Chiba, who transcribed it into an almost microscopic script, reducing ten foolscap pages to a single small piece of paper.

It was then passed to Mac Maharaj, who is now Minister of Transport in the Mandela Government, and was at that time in charge of surreptitious communications at the jail, to smuggle it out. Mr Maharaj hid the transcripts in the bindings of notebooks he used for study and took them with him when he was released in 1976.

Maharaj would communicate when the transcript was safely out



Thirty years after Harold Macmillan's famous words, Nelson Mandela is released. He wrote his autobiography in prison at night

of the country, and only then would the original be destroyed. Meanwhile, what to do with 500 foolscap pages, which the prison authorities would enjoy reading but not find very amusing?

They were buried in the prison yard, but a few weeks later most of them were found by the guards during the construction of a dividing wall. Mandela, and Kathrada and Sisulu, whose emendations were in the margins, were hauled before the prison authorities and deprived of study privileges for four years.

When Maharaj was released, he sent the microscopic manuscript to England and later joined it in London and reconstructed it with the help of a typist. He presented a copy of the typescript to Oliver Tambo, then President of the African National Congress, in Lusaka. "From there the trail goes cold," the author writes in the published book. "I heard nothing from Lusaka about the manuscript, and still don't know precisely what

Oliver did with it. Although it was not published while I was in prison, it forms the basis of this memoir."

At the launch party to celebrate the book's publication in South Africa, Mr Mandela complained that he was pressed by his editors to make the book more readable, and in particular to claim personal credit for much more that happened, saying "I did this..." or "I decided that..." instead of attributing everything to the high command of the African National Congress. Certainly, too, for a knowledgeable reader the book explains a good many matters that did not need explaining. "A kraal," for instance, the author explains, "was a homestead, and usually included a simple fenced-in enclosure for animals."

But the book is notable for cataloguing the way in which the present South African President sacrificed normal human relations — with his wives, his children and his friends — for the freedom struggle and for politics. His first

wife wanted him to give up politics in favour of religion, and when he would not, grew distant and jealous. Of his second wife, Winnie, he says: "Just as I am convinced that her life while I was in prison was more difficult than mine, my own return was also more difficult for her than it was for me. She married a man who soon left her; that man became a myth; and then that myth returned home and proved to be just a man after all."

At one stage he records that under a more tolerant prison regime he was suddenly allowed a "contact visit" with his wife. "I held her to me for what seemed like an eternity," he says. "It had been 21 years since I had even touched my wife's hand."

He began to see the garden that he was allowed to tend on Robben Island as a metaphor for aspects of his life: "A leader must also tend his garden," he writes. "I wrote Winnie two letters about a particularly

beautiful tomato plant, how I coaxed it from a tender seedling to a robust plant that produced deep red fruit. But then, either through some mistake or lack of care, the plant began to wither and decline and nothing I could do would bring it back to health."

"I narrated this small story at great length. I do not know what she read into that letter, but when I wrote it I had a mixture of feelings: I did not want our relationship to go the way of that plant, and yet I felt that I had been unable to nourish many of the most important relationships in my life. Sometimes there is nothing one can do to save something that must die."

In sacking his wife from her job as Deputy Minister in his government, the President said this week that he had had to put all personal feelings to one side. The book makes it clear that he has put such feelings to one side for virtually all his adult life.

MICHAEL HAMLYN

Sacred cows from Haworth

When Juliet Barker began research for her biography of the Brontë family, Nelson Mandela, a co-nominee for the 1995 AT&T Non-Fiction Award, was still in prison. Tony Blair was thinking of standing as an MP, the Berlin wall was just standing.

"Well, the PR blurb called it 11 years," Ms Barker says, "because it sounded glamorous. But that includes my six years as curator of the Brontë Museum. The book itself only got under way when I left that job, in 1988." To look at the volume, a 1,000-page monster with copious notes which challenges almost every assumption that has been made about the family, you might say that even 11 years sounds like speedy work. But the juices of *The Brontës* had been flowing since the author was a child.

"I have always lived near Haworth, so I was close to all the mythology to begin with. I read *Jane Eyre* when I was 11, then *Wuthering Heights*, and then Mrs Gaskell's biography of Charlotte when I was about 13, which coloured my reading of the books, as it has done for generations of readers. That was where the tyrannical father, the dissolute Branwell, the wild Emily, and the poor, dutiful Charlotte came from. My book is not a radical reappraisal: it is just that everyone is locked into the Gaskell picture, which was a deliberate fabrication."

Despite this youthful immersion in literature and local lore, when Ms Barker arrived at Oxford from the North it was to study history rather than English. "I knew that I would always be able to read novels, but I felt that history was a discipline that had to be learnt." Hence the rigorous attention to sources and detail in *The Brontës*, at the expense of famous correlations with the literary works.

"The books are a result of the life, they are not the life put into fiction. Since Gaskell, people have been locked into the opposite way of thinking. It was she who suggested that anti-social characters such as Heathcliff and Rochester were drawn from calamitous real-life encounters, as a defence against perceived improprieties in the novels which threatened the authors' reputations. As a friend of Charlotte, Gaskell's chief concern was to provide a palatable image of her for posterity. It certainly worked, because sales of the books were something like 1,000 copies a year before the biography came out; immediately afterwards they were selling out print-runs of 25,000."

Wuthering Heights and *Jane Eyre* have remained the most popular of English classics ever since, making cult figures of the sisters, who attract a unique following of "Brontëmaniacs". Juliet Barker first encountered true Brontëmania when she took a job as curator of the Brontë Parsonage Museum at Haworth (which has 200,000 visitors each year) while working on her doctorate in history as an absentee from Oxford.

"People would walk around the house saying things like 'Look, there's the sofa where Emily died', and 'Oh, poor Charlotte she had such a hard life'. In fact Emily didn't die on the sofa at all, and Charlotte really wasn't that unfortunate. In fact, most of the furniture was put in the house after the Brontës had died — and sketches on the walls supposed to be by the children were fakes, so I paped over them. What I was interested in was the library, the unique collection of Brontë papers, but the 'Poor Charlotte' school of visitor wanted

something easier to identify with, even if it was bogus. Brontëmaniacs are attracted by the doom and gloom of the Haworth story, but they are not particularly literary — it is fair to say that while they have read *Wuthering Heights* they are not the sort to have read *Black Fouse*."

Barker's genocide of the sacred cows attracted huge press attention, as well as the condemnation of school Brontë fans. Was there a deliberate effort (with an eye on sales) to challenge the status quo from the outset?

"Not at all. In the time I spent working on the library I became aware that there was a lot of stuff that had been ignored or misread, and a lot that had never been found. Branwell's papers, for example, had been sold all over America. I had them microfilmed, and I assembled them all in one place for the first time in 150 years. The most exciting moment was discovering letters which proved he had an affair with Mrs Robinson, his employer's wife. Until then, there had been only speculation."

By the time Barker left Haworth, she was certain that there was a great deal to be reappraised. Two years were spent going through contemporary local newspapers, which had been ignored until then. "They made it clear that Haworth was by no means the gloomy hamlet cut off from society that Gaskell described, but a thriving town with 13 'working mills, choral societies and literary groups.' It was, though, the picture of Charlotte as a struggling and manipulative, far more the tyrant than her father, which upset the Charlottephiles."

"When I had finished the book, I



Barker: affair was proved

gave a lecture to the Brontë Society about Mrs Gaskell's motivations for writing her biography. About halfway through, someone got up and left. Then some more got up, and from then on there was a steady flow of disgruntled members heading towards the exit.

"When I wrote *The Brontës* I was aware that there would be some people who wouldn't want to know, but underestimated the passion of the collectors. I'm still getting half a dozen letters a day, even now." And have the ramifications of her myth-shattering image put her off writing biographies?

"Not at all, I'm working in another one now. And after that I think there may be quite a bit more to be said about Mrs Gaskell."

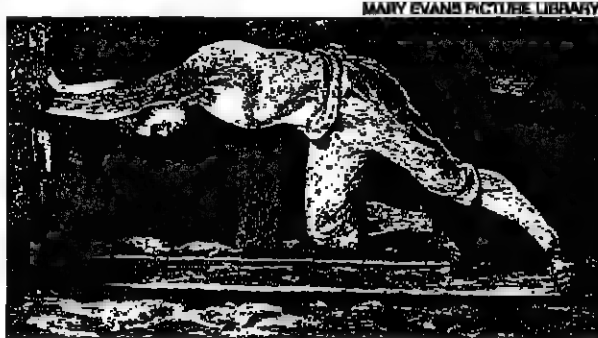
GILES COREN

A rich seam of village life

Grandmothers' Drums, it won both the Thomas Cook award for the best travel book of the year, and the Somerset Maugham award.

Since then, he has struggled on, living in north London, and surviving by writing. *Coming Back Brontës* is about another village, and one that he thought he knew better until he looked closer — Horden, the mining village in Durham that his family came from.

The book is both a vivid picture of life in Horden, past and present, and an account of how the myths he had absorbed from his family about the place were shattered by his discoveries. It is a well-con-



Hudson finds the old industries "made life possible"

structed book. It leads you from his great-grandfather's time up to the world of closed pits — the title comes from a local expression that means "coming out of the mine while the roof collapses behind you". But it is not only history. "It was detective research," he told me, "and you don't meet your material

in the correct order. The historian goes on to put it in the right order. But if you just do that you obliterate all the pleasure you got from the search."

So in the book he keeps two balls in the air at the same time — the history of the place as he ascertained it, and the day-to-day story of his meetings with people, his discoveries and his troubled emotions. (He did not like everybody he met.)

"Before I decided to write the book," he says, "Horden was simply my father. It was the place as it existed for him in the 1930s. I associated it entirely with socialism." But going there was a revelation of "all its subtle shades".

His feelings about what he found are mixed. The miners' lives were terrible, yet "the old industries made life possible", and the miners and their families "got through it with dignity and enjoyment". He acknowledges that the pits were probably doomed, but deplores the way the Government closed them without putting anything in their place. At the same time, he senses that there is a legacy of passivity in Horden, a feeling among the northern working class that it is useless and even wrong to change things, to educate oneself, to get away. Yet he is sure that education offers "the only possible future".

As for himself, Hudson feels changed by the experience of writing it — "I feel more whole". He is working now on a novel and "trying to get an advance". At this point in his writing life, his appearance as one of the final runners for the AT&T Award is just the recognition he needs.

DERWENT MAY

Magical ingredients from the spell of Bernstein

Humphrey Burton says that writing the biography of Leonard Bernstein was "a cathartic recompense for the passing of someone who, even though I was 39 when he died, was a very strong father-figure, and whose death left a gaping hole in my working life."

The two men first met when Bernstein came to Britain and appeared with Huw Wheldon on *Monitor* in 1959 for the launch of his opera, *Candide*. "I fell under the spell like almost everyone he met. We hit it off immediately."

Whenever they did argue, Burton says, it was because they had both drunk too much, which explains why, in one blinding fury over some Bernstein abuse, Burton managed to stalk into a plate-glass window, knocking himself out. The next day Burton and Bernstein went windsurfing together in Tel Aviv harbour.

"When you were a friend of Bernstein," Burton says, "you were a friend for life." (Only one exception can be found in Burton's formidably researched 600 pages: the composer David Diamond, who had gossiped to Joan Peyser for a scurrilous kiss-and-tell biography which mentioned Bernstein when it was published in 1987.)

For Burton, Bernstein was an inspiration. "He was already a tremendous expert on television, so when we came to

launch music on BBC2, which remains one of the peaks in my life, it was very much with the benefit of his influence and example." Burton went on to make some 160 music films, working with Bernstein "in his conducting orbit" for two or three weeks every year.

"While I had a degree of closeness which would be most biographers' dream, when writing the book I came to realise that I knew him much less well than I had thought. It is my view now that no one knew every aspect of him, not even his family, so my task became to fill in all the gaps in my knowledge."

Not all biographers, Burton concedes, would think so close a relationship an advantage. "Some would say it is necessary to be at arm's length and completely dispassionate, but there was a fellow called Boswell, you know. While I do not wish to claim that I am in any way on a level with Boswell, one of the nicest things any reviewer said was that my book had a Boswellian quality."

His closeness to Bernstein was, in any case, the reason why Burton was preferred by



Bernstein: 2,000 friends

the Bernstein Estate to several professional biographers who applied for access to the papers, letters, diaries, scrap books and cuttings which Burton, with typical precociousness, had started collecting when he was 14. "Another biographer has said: 'Beware relatives, they are the worst,'" Burton says, "but it took me

three years to win the full confidence of Bernstein's sister, Shirley, and the letters she gave me which Lenny had written to her while struggling with his sexuality before getting married... that sort of intimacy you cannot get any other way."

Burton says he does not see himself as a biographer "interpreting a personality or projecting them in a literary way, but rather working away, doggedly recording the facts as I find them."

He does not expect to win the AT&T Award, though on the morning we spoke, newly back from Copenhagen, he was scuttling to the bookshops to buy his rivals' efforts. "I certainly do not expect to win. I am not in the same world as Nelson Mandela for a start, and for me it will be a fantastic privilege if I can just shake his hand. But I do want, when I meet the others, to be able to look them in the eye and say, which very few people are able to do when they talk to me: 'I have read your book and I enjoyed it.'"

This is Burton's first book, but he is close to signing up for a second biography, with a

living subject of whom he already has some close knowledge. "I cannot say more, but I do not think I could write about anyone for whom I did not already feel strong affection. That was the joy with Lenny, that he really worked at his friendships, sending birthday cards, writing sonnets for them, resuming conversations where they had left off, remembering what your children were doing, and really caring for what must have been about 2,000 people, his circle of friendship was so wide."

Burton says: "It is a terrific honour just to be in this short list. I think it must be seen partly as a tribute to Bernstein himself. His genius and zest for life must have touched the jury's reaction."

ROBIN YOUNG

THE CRITICS' VIEW OF THE SHORTLISTED BOOKS



Coming Back Brontës

THIS is Mark Hudson's exploration of the Durham mining village from which his family came. "Painstakingly evokes the lost world of the pits," wrote *The Sunday Telegraph*. "Beautifully written and observed," said *The Times*. "What he discovers is not only a family history that has collapsed in on itself, but its odd air pockets of understanding, but a whole society. When, and if, the rescue team turns up is anybody's guess."

"He both mourns the demise of coal, and is glad to see the back of it," said *The Independent*. "But it would not have been appropriate if his story, like the mine, hadn't ended with something of a sob."



The Brontës

HERE is Humphrey Burton's loyal and affectionate memoir of a friend — and the reviewers all agreed that the book was as energetic as Bernstein himself. "One lays down these pages exhausted by the subject's inexhaustibility," said *The Sunday Telegraph*. "Always new plans, ideas, challenges, affairs and journeys, all entered on with frenetic zeal." "Researched with a thoroughness approaching the Teutonic," wrote *The Times*. "It dwells perhaps to excess on Bernstein's sex life," opined *The Daily Telegraph*. "From an early age he fell operatically in love with regiments of young men... But a book worthy of a great man."



Long Walk to Freedom

THIS is Mark Hudson's exploration of the Durham mining village from which his family came. "Painstakingly evokes the lost world of the pits," wrote *The Sunday Telegraph*. "Beautifully written and observed," said *The Times*. "What he discovers is not only a family history that has collapsed in on itself, but its odd air pockets of understanding, but a whole society. When, and if, the rescue team turns up is anybody's guess."

"He both mourns the demise of coal, and is glad to see the back of it," said *The Independent*. "But it would not have been appropriate if his story, like the mine, hadn't ended with something of a sob."



The Brontës

THIS 1,000-page book about the Brontë family shakes up every prevailing idea about its members. *The Daily Telegraph* observed that Charlotte is portrayed as "snappish, snobbish and sour", while Patrick was no longer a "paranoid father" but "emerges as an heroic man". "Ruthlessly meticulous revisionist history," said *The Sunday Times*. "But Charlotte's voice resists this version of her." "An outstanding achievement, a magnificent portrait which not only contains a wealth of important new material, but is also a delight to read," said *The Times*. "Should draw crowds," commented *The Spectator*.

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BOOKS

15

How to knit a story from wool

Writing a book means being proactive and banishing all self-doubt



DANIEL JOHNSON

Even the most disciplined and productive authors, though, may find it impossible to complete a book, especially if they happen to be academics. The University of Oxford, where he is a professor of English, recently the scene of an impressive memorial service for the historian Angus Macintyre, who died in a car crash last December. The presence of so many eminent colleagues and pupils testified to Macintyre's academic distinction; and to evoke his remarkable personality there were contributions from three poets (James Fenton, John Fuller and Peter Levi), from Professor Roy Foster, and from Angus's son Ben, the present New York correspondent of *The Times*.

Not every writer need be prolific. Several of the greatest teachers who ever lived probably wrote nothing at all: Buddha, Zoroaster, Abraham, Socrates, even Jesus Christ. Yet these examples are from the ancient world. Most of those who have influenced mankind in modern times have been writers.

To write well is as rare a talent today as it ever was. Bad books are usually due to the lack of that talent, not to lack of preparation. If a writer cannot bring himself to stop preparing to write, his muse may be telling him to desist altogether. To embark on a book is to be proactive, to banish self-doubt. Few great writers have let research obstruct their writing. Few great books have been left unwritten due to "writer's block". Talking of great books, it has often been pointed out to me that new editions of literary classics receive very few reviews. I intend to make up for this here from time to time. This week, Trollope: the

World's Classics paperback edition of his works in 49 volumes is now complete, with the appearance of *The Later Short Stories*. These are cheap reading copies, with the Barchester and Palliser novels available in bargain sets for £20 and £24 respectively. For those who prefer hardbacks, *Can You Forgive Her?* — the first of the Pallisers — is the latest in the Everyman Library's elegant Trollope series, at £11.99.

Meanwhile, the Trollope Society's Complete Edition continues its steady progress at a rate of four titles a year, and has now reached the half-way stage. The latest pair are *Castle Richmond*, introduced by Max Hastings, and *The Claverings*, introduced by Max Egmont. Hastings thinks Trollope's notorious depiction of the Irish potato famine was by no means complacent, but even he is too squeamish to excuse the novelist's Malthusian view that starvation was merely the means by which "a merciful God... disencumbered" an overpopulated island. Readers who want to subscribe to this handsome edition, published jointly with the Folio Society, should write to John Lenz, The Trollope Society, 9a North Street, London SW4 0HN.

Mad and bad on a Montana mountain

THE STANDOFF By Chuck Hogan Macmillan, £9.99

THE tragedy of the United States is that it took the Oklahoma bombing to make most people realise that their fellow Americans were as dangerous as anyone else, but better armed.

America's insane gun legislation has trapped a nation in a vicious circle. "There are so many armed villains out there I need a gun to protect myself, and anyone who tries to take it off me had better watch out." With *The Standoff* Chuck Hogan, a 26-year-old from Massachusetts, who used to work in a video store before this first novel netted him \$1 million in pre-publication movie rights, has touched a raw nerve with a sharpened scalpel.

The siege at Waco by the FBI and Federal Marshals was a gripping television right up to its bungled denouement. In *The Standoff* Hogan has reduced the formula to its quintessential: one crazed, hillbilly, white, supremacist, anti-Semite Bible-basher holed up in a cabin on a Montana mountain with his wife and heavily armed children, cordoned off by the high-tech hit squads of so-called civilisation, commanded by a soul-searching ex-drunk with marital problems.

The biggest threat of all comes from the several thousand loose cannons in the hands of the mountain man's supporters. This is an array of backwoodsmen, neo-Nazis and separatists calling for an independent white Christian republic in the northwestern states of Washington, Wyoming, Montana and Oregon. But what crime has the fugitive on the mountain top committed?

This is not so much a story with a plot as a set-piece with an escalation curve. Hogan's main characters are well drawn, in particular Special Agent Banish and the local county's complex Indian sheriff, and he has a good ear for dialogue — important in a siege situation where the degree of communication can be crucial to the outcome.

The FBI jargon is kept at a level that is both believable and comprehensible, the code language of trained hostage negotiators adding to the tension, particularly when it is revealed that the psychological indicators of the "surrender ritual" and the "suicide ritual" are identical. The climax is made for the movies.

They all fall down

POLLEN By Jeff Noon Ringpull Fiction, £14.99

A THREE-page nasal explosion introduces *Pollen*, a novel that is as weird as it is wonderful, depicting a Manchester of the future threatened by a rising pollen count.

The Mancunians have changed a little, with fur on their faces and a tendency to talk to machines, since the citizens are formed from the intermingling of humans, animals and computer software.

This might all sound like science fiction at its most unlikely, but Jeff Noon's second novel is surprising in its subtlety and deftness of characterisation. While everywhere people are collapsing in sneezing bouts, the story depicts a woman's pursuit of the murderer of her cab-driver lover. Her journey through the urban badlands is set against a mood of over-ripe corruption, described with lyricism and wit.

There is a druggy atmosphere to the writing as the city approaches breakdown and the half-dog, half-human police try to block the uncovering of the roots of the plague. Noon's first novel won the Arthur C. Clarke Award for science fiction, and this work is set to increase his admirers.

SEAN COUGHLIN

PETER MILLAR

Talking about their generation

Ian Brunskill on 860 pages of pop history that sum up five decades of human behaviour set to music

THE FABER BOOK OF POP Edited by Hanif Kureishi and Jon Savage Faber, £16.99

PART innocent rebellion, part cynical exploitation: part self-expression, part mindless fashion... "Pop", as the American critic Greil Marcus observed, "is an argument anyone can join in" — and in the 860-odd pages of this generously priced anthology, pretty much anyone does.

The familiar bylines are all here, from the best and the worst of the specialist writers, to those lesser lions of modern letters who found that pop could pay. For the likes of Colin MacInnes, Tom Wolfe, Norman Mailer, Studs Terkel and Hunter S. Thompson, pop was a ticket to a vivid alternative world that had a sound-track but lacked a literary voice.

The pop alternative is all-embracing. Pete Townshend of the Who proclaimed in 1965 that "We stand for pop art clothes, pop art music and pop art behaviour. We live pop art". Kureishi and Savage glory in those eclectic ambitions. From the pre-modern sharpness of the 1940s dance bands to the post-modern miseries of the 1990s rave, clothes and behaviour matter as much as music.



Roger Daltrey and Pete Townshend, who in 1965 proclaimed: "We stand for pop art behaviour. We live pop art"

the draft; disco becomes a celebration of gay sexuality. But if pop's challenge to society is wide-ranging, not everyone finds it effective. For Paul Johnson, writing in *The New Statesman* in 1964 and reprinted here, "The Menace of Beatism" is not that it is

dangerous, but that it is vacuous: "Our society has long been brainwashed in preparation for this apotheosis of inanity. For more than two decades now, more and more intellectuals have turned their backs on their trade and begun to worship at the shrine

of 'pop culture'." Germaine Greer, grappling breathlessly with the revolutionary potential of Mick Farren and the Deviants in *Oz* in 1969, may well prove him right.

Even cleaned up and repackaged here, stripped of the crackles of context like old 45s remastered for CD, Johnson and Greer share an authentic period ring. That is what gives the compendium its value: a collage of conflicting voices, this is not so much the whole history of pop, as the whole history of everything, set to music.

The nun and the jailbird

TWO women, both young, both introverts. One is a nun, one is a lifer in Holloway Jail. They share a terrible past and an inability to break free from it, or from one another, despite a 14-year separation. Hence the setting for a psychological thriller and an exploration of prisons, both actual and metaphorical.

The thriller bit is good, but the premise that religious life is as much a prisoner of the soul as jail depends upon what one thinks of religious life. Marcelle Bernstein has a serious but prurient attitude towards it, and there is much in *Sacred and Profane* to suggest that she believes that sacrifice and repression are

SACRED AND PROFANE By Marcelle Bernstein Doubleday, £15.99

the same thing, and that the sacrifice of the expression of sexuality (as opposed, say, to the expression of talents or ideas) makes for the greatest repression of all. In this way, Bernstein's narrative drive is tedious, and too often she makes for cliché, rather than demanding or challenging insights.

Bernstein writes well about people, and she has a good ear for dialogue: her scenes inside Holloway prison are convincing. However, as far as ideas are concerned she confines herself to stereotypes, and her



Bernstein: ear for dialogue

prose is too full of inconsequential metaphors. For example, all three main characters either love being in, or are terrified of, water.

Signifying what? Still, it makes for a lot of water imagery, and some nice wet nearly-love scenes. And I do wish she wouldn't use images that have no resonance for the reader, such as "The moth stirred and opened wings the colour of memory."

This is a good book, and I enjoyed it, but I did long for less of the water imagery and less sexual yearning of the suddenly-too-tight-trousers variety. Perhaps when *Sacred and Profane* is made into the inevitable television dramatisation, with much knitting of brows and kissing in ponds, I shall be enlightened.

MARY LOUDON

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2	FINGERPRINTS OF THE GODS Graham Hancock (Heinemann)	£16.99	2	3
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4	HIGH FIDELITY Nick Hornby (Gollancz)	£4.99	6	4
5	WISDEN CRICKETER'S ALMANAC 1995 (Widen)	£23.50	9	2
6	THE BEST OF FRIENDS Joanna Trollope (Bloomsbury)	£4.99	3	5
7	AS IT SEEMED TO ME John Cole (Weidenfeld)	£20	0	1
8	KILLING ZONE Harry McCallan (Bloomsbury)	£16.99	0	1
9	TAKE IT LIKE A MAN Boy George (Sidgwick & Jackson)	£4.99	0	1
10	SHARPE'S BATTLE Bernard Cornwell (HarperCollins)	£9.99	0	1
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6	EVERVILLE Clive Barker (HarperCollins)	£5.99	0	1
7	PLAYFAIR CRICKET ANNUAL 1995 Bill Frindall (Headline)	£4.50	12	2
8	LETTERS FROM LONDON 1990-1995 Julian Barnes (Picador)	£6.99	3	2
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BROOKFIELD'S likeable thirtysomething heroine, Jane, leaves her selfish husband to embark on the single life. She discovers that, with two small children and no job, this is harder than she imagines. Things go from bad to worse when her former husband, now remarried, tries to take their son away from her. A perceptive and very readable account of the strains of marital breakdown.

■ HIS CHRISTMAS BOX

By Julian Fane

Constable, £15.99

THE hero of Fane's adroit social comedy, Willoughby Todd, is a retired military man supporting a wife, mistress and several grown-up children. As a Lloyd's name he believes his financial future to be secure; when this turns out not to be the case, he is forced to reconsider everything. In the process he discovers that only the very wealthy can afford to treat money as unimportant.

■ THE CHEQUER BOARD

By Sybil Marshall

Michael Joseph, £14.99

MARSHALL'S short stories deal with village life in a timeless rural setting, but where the resemblance to the *Miss Read* stories ends. The first story, set in a vicarage,

deals with snobbery, fraud and suicide: the rest offer a similarly uncompromising view of life. They are written in a matter-of-fact style alleviated by moments of dry humour.

■ THIRD AND INDIANA

By Steve Lopez

Viking, £10.99

THIS first novel, which is set in the mean streets of Philadelphia, concerns a range of lowlife characters, including 12-year-old Gabriel, and his mother Ofelia, who finds herself fighting for her son's allegiance with an evil drug baron. The author writes plausibly and well about his chosen territory, managing to invest the grim reality of his characters' lives with humour and optimism.

■ VINNIE GOT BLOWN AWAY

By Jeremy Cameron

Touchstone, £9.99

A TEENAGE petty criminal gets out of his depth as major league drug dealers step into his East London territory in this tale of betrayal, revenge and honour among thieves. Jeremy Cameron's first novel presents an energetic subculture of crimes committed in hot cars and cold blood, all described in the words of a young crook. But the novel gets stuck going in circles before running out of fuel.

CHRISTINA KONING and SEAN COUGHLAN



Once roaming in their millions from Syria to China, and now competing with man for space, barely 50,000 elephants survive in the whole of Asia

Cry from a continent

Brian Jackman on a journey across India by elephant

An elephant is a wondrous beast. With its trunk, powered by 100,000 muscles, it can uproot a tree or pluck a pip from an orange. Its sneeze can knock out a dog.

Mark Shand thought he knew a thing or two about elephants. A few years ago, he impulsively bought an elephant called Tara and rode her 800 miles across India — a journey celebrated in his previous bestseller, *Travels on my Elephant*.

Home again after his adventures, he pined for India and for Tara. For hours on end, he rode disconsolately around his flat on a large toy elephant on wheels. Then a film producer called him. Would he make a second journey by elephant across India for a television documentary?

Back in India he meets up with his photographer friend, Aditya Patankar, a Marathi nobleman with a sense of humour as quick as a striking cobra. This time they are joined by a third party in the diminutive guise of Parbati Barua, the ultimate elephant guru. Only in India would you find such an extraordinary character as Parbati: a wall with laser eyes and an iron will, given to wearing a pair of razor-sharp kukris that dangle from her waist like a gunslinger's six-shooters.

Under Parbati's tutelage, Shand signs on as a *chaarkari*, an apprentice mahout, fit only to gather food for the elephants. Together they set out on a three-month journey across Bengal and Assam, heading for the jungles of Assam. Their transport is a pair of elephants,

long-legged Lakhi and her sister, the pale-eyed, eternally hungry Kanchen. "My sweeties," Parbati calls them.

Once again, Shand has come back from India with a ripping yarn: a tale of men, mahouts, movies and magic, told with wit and affection. At times he is wonderfully evocative, as when he describes the golden light of *gau-dhuli*, the hour of the cauld ride. But there is also a dark shadow which dominates the story. The Asian elephant is in trouble.

Once Asian elephants roamed in their millions from Syria to China. Now, in the whole of Asia, barely 50,000 survive. In modern India, whose population explodes

each year with another 20 million people, there is nowhere left for them to hide. Every year in the tea gardens of Bengal, elephants and people are killing each other as they compete for space at the edges of the shrinking forest.

Even the national parks are no longer safe. Shand had hoped to visit Manas national park in Assam; but its jungles are now full of terrorists and poachers who kidnap foreigners and murder forest officers. Shand's plea for these giant creatures is a cry from the heart of a continent whose last wilderness is being lost, and is all the more powerful because of his rare understanding of India and her people.

Queen of the Elephants, a two-hour film of the journey is on the Discovery Channel on May 14

A crime novelist expresses anger about justice and the judicial system

■ THE SCOLD'S BRIDLE

By Minette Walters

Pan paperback, £4.99

CONSIDER the evidence. Within three years of publishing *The Ice House*, the winner of the John Creasey Award for Best First Crime Novel, Minette Walters is published in 24 languages. Her second novel, *The Sculptress*, won America's much coveted Edgar Allan Poe Award and has been bought by BBC Television. The third, *The Scold's Bridle*, which is out in paperback this week, won the Crime Writers Association's Gold Dagger.

"I can't believe it," says Walters, who has just finished correcting the proofs of her fourth novel, *The Dark Room*. "When I started writing, I didn't even know you could get prizes for crime novels. To have won three is more than I ever expected — it's unbelievable, especially in a genre that's the most crowded in all of literature and where the standards are so high."

Presenting her with the Gold Dagger last month, Rabbi Julia Neuberger spoke up passionately for crime writing

Wanting nothing but the truth

which, she said, was often "the best form of moral and philosophical debate". Walters's fiction exemplifies her point: "All my books are about the search for truth."

A prison visitor, she assumes nothing about the convicts and former convicts with whom she is in contact. "It is very difficult to tell if someone is telling the truth. An accomplished liar will be very convincing indeed. You have to try and remain objective and wait for the evidence. But then, how do you know whether or not someone has monkeyed around with the evidence? And what, anyway, is truth?"

Like all good writers, Walters is an observer. "I'm eclectic. I suppose writers are always opinionated," she continues, lamenting the inability of so many individuals to

propose an original thought. "I never come up with a plot; I simply have an idea." Thus, *The Scold's Bridle* is about familial repression. *The Sculptress* is about her dislike of labels. "All my writing is about the importance of tolerance. I hate the idea that you judge a person without even speaking to them."

Urbane, vivacious and petite, Walters lives in Hampshire with her husband Alec and sons Roland, 15, and Philip, 13. Educated at Godolphin, she wrote even as a young child and, after studying French at Durham University, took a sub-editing job on *Woman's Weekly*. An editor after two years, she was responsible for the eight novels published monthly by *Woman's Weekly Library*. "I had to read so many manuscripts and, eventually, I decided I could do better," she recalls, acknowledging the discipline of a 30,000-word form which precluded sex and alcohol.



Walters: a prize per novel

Married and loathing pregnancy, Walters stopped writ-

ing and, for a time, involved herself in local politics, though she says now she is much too anarchic to toe a party line. Then, in the late 1980s, with the children at school, she sat down and began to write *The Ice House*. Jane Gregory, the literary agent to whom she sent the manuscript, remembers that: "I knew immediately that Minette would be a star, though it's amazing how quickly she's come to be so highly regarded throughout the world."

Through her fiction, Walters takes a metaphorical hammer to the judicial system. "I'm depressed and angry," she concludes, citing the O.J. Simpson trial and the Nicholas Ingram case, about which she protested to the Governor of Georgia. "I don't believe in capital punishment and I'm very angry about justice and the judicial system. There is no justice, so how can you persuade the under-class — and I hate to put it that way, but I think there is now an under-class — that middle-class values are worth attending to?"

LIZ THOMSON

When killing is in the line of duty

A former member of the SAS and the Royal Ulster Constabulary describes his missions abroad

IT SEEMS barely credible for one man to have crammed so much violence into his life. The career of Harry McCallion has involved killing and more killing, although all of it is strictly in the line of duty.

Recently there has been a plethora of books written by former members of special forces, especially the SAS, who have emerged from their covert lives to reveal their acts of derring-do, often to the disquiet of their former employers.

The most successful example was *Bravo Two Zero*, by Andy McNab, a gripping

account of the disastrous setbacks suffered by an SAS patrol behind Iraqi lines during the 1991 Gulf War.

The latest blood and guts story is not in that league, yet in his own way McCallion has succeeded in giving an extraordinary insight into the psychology of a man who has survived despite deliberately choosing to live as dangerous a life as possible.

■ KILLING ZONE
By Harry McCallion
Bloomsbury, £15.99

McCallion, the son of a Glasgow gangster, served seven years with the Parachute Regiment, two years of sabotage and killing missions with the South African special forces, six years with the SAS, and another six years with the Royal Ulster Constabulary

during some of the most serious terrorist incidents, before finally hanging up his guns and studying for the bar.

He reveals that he was a member of a South African undercover unit that linked up with the Rhodesian SAS in 1978 in a doomed mission codenamed Operation Milk Float to assassinate Robert Mugabe — later to become Prime Minister of Zimbabwe

— and Joshua Nkomo, his political rival.

McCallion's tales of training in the SAS follow a familiar pattern of endurance and human endeavour. But it is his experiences as a Royal Ulster Constabulary officer in Belfast which provide the most interesting insight into how a man trained to destroy his enemy has to restrain his natural tendencies in an environment where known terrorists are able to walk free on the streets.

MICHAEL EVANS

TEENAGE FICTION

It's a boys' world

IT CANNOT be by chance that some of the best current novels for the under-15s are for the boys. The idea that reading is a pallid attraction compared with the heady welter of activities available to teenage boys has long been responsible for limited choice and crudely aggressive heroes. Happily, authors who combine suspense with more than a passing insight into the psyche of adolescent boys have recently brought some much needed variety.

Among them is Nicholas Wilde, whose fourth novel, *Eye of the Storm* (Collins, £8), shows a sensitive understanding of the fact that a tough adolescent image can often camouflage fears. Motorbike-riding Rory, secretly afraid of the dark, is thrown together with his new stepbrother, Ashton, wearer of the ever-immaculate T-shirt. When the boys are isolated in the Welsh borders, their rivalries culminate in a dangerous rock-climbing episode with Rory's dark, angry feelings urging him on to do dark, angry things. Male bonding eventually succeeds.

There is a firm belief in the book trade that nothing can make boys between the ages of ten and 14 buy a book with a girl on the cover. The boy on the cover of *The Cellar Lad* by Theresa Tomlinson (Julia Macrae, £9.99), like the girl on the cover of Tomlinson's previous novel, *The Herring Girls*, is representative of child workers in the 19th century. In *The Cellar Lad*, a similar story, Ben Sternale is 11 when he starts his first "proper job" at the steelworks. Illustrated with local-history photographs and set at the time of the Chartist movement, Ben's story with its distinctive characters and varied family relationships is far from being just another dose of moral or political cod-liver oil.

The question of whether computer games effectively shut off all other forms of human discourse is currently a minefield of political correctness. Circling warily round the topic, *Mat's Milbon* by Andrew Norris (Hamish Hamilton, £9.99) explores what happens when a schoolboy's game invention results in a seven-figure royalty cheque. From chauffeur-driven Rolls Royces to reluctant philanthropy, Matthew's spending round is reasonably entertaining. Surprisingly, though, he is never ripped off, the absence of villains leading to ultimate blandness.

On the face of it, *The Thwarting of Baron Boligrew* by the late screenwriter Robert Bolt (Cape, £9.99) is a boys' book of the old school. But in a medieval adventure of eccentric knights, wily dragons and hobgoblins of "loose proclivities", Bolt's adaptation of his original stage play has a charm which defies age and gender categories.

Wolfecho by Roger J. Green (Oxford, £5.99) cleverly combines penetrating realism with a thrilling historical ghost story. Thirteen-year-old Scot has fallen out with his father — a body-building fanatic addicted to war videos — when he picks up some vibes in his home town, an urban sprawl built on Norman remains. When Scott is drawn back into the past existence of a savage Norman duke, his shifts in time between the 11th and 20th centuries are so vividly drawn that by the end of the book you do not doubt that you have just read a classic. The mantle of C. S. Lewis hangs over this talented author.

Told in a quick-witted style with gripping intimacy, *Ten Hours to Live* by the youthful agony uncle Pete Johnson (Mammoth, £3.50) is a tale of shattered love between Ben, a "Sir Lancelot" figure, and Sophie, an overwhelmed schoolgirl who, as he sadly records, "has taken all my niceness away". Not Terryson, but with so few books that reflect the transparent concerns of teenagers without resorting to sex and violence, it is better than Stephen King.

MAUREEN OWEN

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NEW IN PAPERBACK

■ THE WATERWORKS

By E. L. Doctorow

Picador, £5.99

THE year is 1871; the scene, the brooding gaslit streets of New York. A newspaper editor investigates the disappearance of his most promising young freelance who has vanished suddenly after claiming to have seen his recently deceased father alive again. As the mystery unfolds amid a cast of gothic characters, what emerges is as compelling as it is horrifying. Doctorow's vivid historical imagination not only breathes new life into an intriguing era, but also relates it to our own.

■ EATING PAVLOVA

By D. M. Thomas

Sceptre, £5.99

AS Sigmund Freud lies dying in Hampstead, nursed by his daughter, he reviews his life, mixing past with present, fantasy with reality. Incest abounds and, with every female character reduced to a set of voracious genitalia, the book is as characteristic of its author as its subject. Thomas's Freud seems oddly detached from humanity, though he does predict the advent of rampant feminism and child-abuse witchhunts. The imagery is gross, but there is food for thought.



Jill Paton Walsh: published her novel herself

■ KNOWLEDGE OF ANGELS

By Jill Paton Walsh

Black Swan, £6.99

HAVING been turned down by 14 publishers, Walsh resorted to publishing this novel herself. It went on to win a place on the Booker shortlist last year.

Knowledge of Angels is a combination of medieval thriller and philosophical fable. The ordered, Christian civilisation of a remote Mediterranean island is disrupted by the arrival of two

strangers: one, a 12-year-old girl abandoned at birth to be reared by mountain wolves, the other a cultured but atheistic castaway, rescued from the sea by fishermen.

The unusual pair become the focus of a complex argument about the existence of God. But when their presences challenge the established orders of church and state, the dark and predatory forces of the Inquisition are roused. What begins as cerebral debate ends as a matter of life and death.

■ CHARLES PALLISER

By Charles Palliser

Vintage, £5.99

PALLISER is a self-consciously abstruse novelist. He teases the reader, laying false trails, employing narrators who are later deemed unreliable. And yet beneath this rubble of post-modern tricks is an exciting thriller, structured as a series of ten episodes interconnected by the theme of betrayal. It is just a pity Palliser is unable to suppress his urge to impress.

■ BETRAYALS

By Charles Palliser

Vintage, £5.99

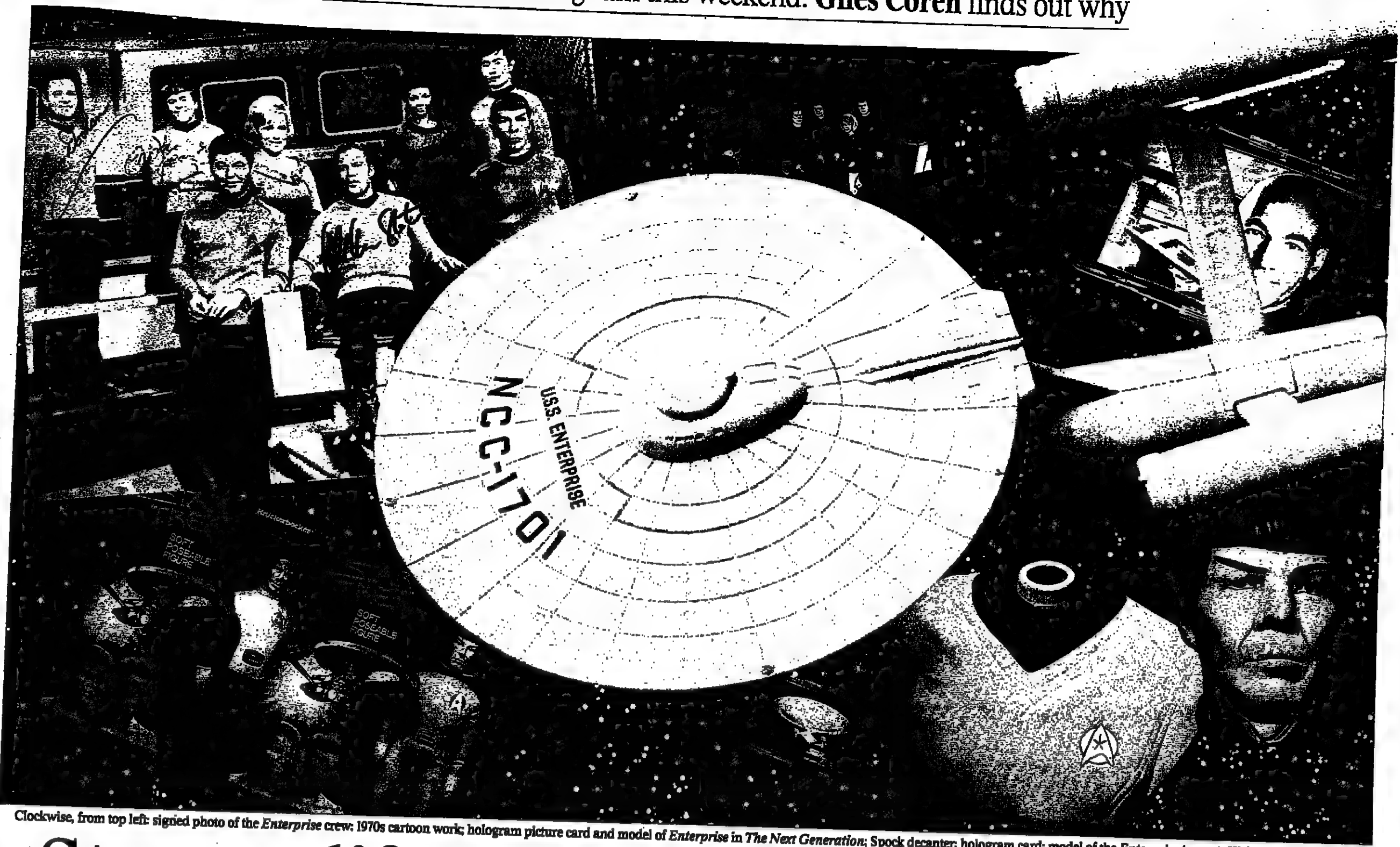
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Contributors: Rachel Campbell-Johnston, Nicki Household, Jason Cowley, Jake Michie

COLLECTING

17

Oddly attired people will beam into Birmingham this weekend. Giles Coren finds out why



Clockwise, from top left: signed photo of the Enterprise crew; 1970s cartoon work; hologram picture card and model of Enterprise in The Next Generation; Spock decanter; hologram card; model of the Enterprise (centre); Kirk and Spock figures

Strange life forms on a mission for memorabilia

When a man with a heavily scarred forehead made of brown latex says to you, "really, we are no different from stamp collectors", it is reasonable to argue that he is wrong. It happened to me at a comic mart a couple of years ago, and I did.

We all know about "trekkies", those peculiar men and women who dress up as Klingons or as Captain James Tiberius Kirk and go to special nightclubs to talk warp-speeds and phasers with other peculiar people dressed up as Bones, Scotty, and Sulu. We are aware that there is a dictionary and phrase book of Klingon, and that many people speak it fluently, meeting at seminars of the self-styled Klingon University to discuss niceties of pronunciation.

Thousands of them will be at the Birmingham NEC this weekend for Memorabilia '95, Europe's largest pop culture event, to buy and sell their wares. While the event incorporates pop music, television, film, comic, and science-fiction collectables, all of which are part of the boom in post-1950s memorabilia, by far the greatest number of visitors will be trekkers (a term they accept, if only as preferable to "trekkie") easily outdoing their nearest competitors in fandom, the followers of *Star Wars* and *Doctor Who*.

The craze has existed in Britain since the early 1980s, according to Rob Byron of Time Trek, a specialist store in Kent. "There was a resurgence of interest with *Star Trek: The Next Generation* later in the decade," he explains (although he calls the series "Next Gen", like all enthusiasts), "and now people collect things relating not only to the 1960s series and to *Next Gen*, but to *Deep Space Nine* and *Voyager*, two other *Trek*-related series, as well as film merchandise."

"People collect the figures and toys, the magazines, the books and videos, all of which are on sale at our shop, as well as older items such as food promotions and bubble gum cards from the 1960s. Original props are rarer still," he says. The 400 phasers from the first series were all trashed after filming, and much of what is available has been removed from sets illegally.

Mr Byron is unable to explain the spread of *Trek* appeal, nor can he describe a



Larry Heinrich with newer additions to his £30,000-worth of Star Trek collectables

typical collector. "Some are people who discover a favourite childhood toy in the attic and start from there. Others remember a toy and try to buy it again, only to discover the wealth of merchandise now on the market. There are men in suits who come in because they have seen their kids watching *Next Gen* and realised how good it is. There are eight-year-olds, and there are middle-aged women."

"A useful guideline is that the nastier an item is, the more it will be worth"

More frustratingly for the uninitiated earthman, Mr Byron cannot offer a due to the best-value buyers, saying only that most trekkers buy for love rather than profit.

Larry Heinrich, who will tend his Totally Trek stall at the NEC, has a collection

worth about £30,000. Mr Heinrich, who works for "a major clearing bank", says "a useful guideline is that the cheaper and nastier an item is, the more it will be worth, because people are more likely to have thrown nasty things away". By way of example, he produces a decanter in the form of a bust of Mr Spock, pulling off the head to reveal a cork. "This is lovely," he says, "but is worth only about £70. A similar

object was made of the whole Spock figure, painted gold—it was disgusting but is now worth about £700."

Cheap items in Mr Heinrich's collection include an empty cardboard box which once held *Star Trek* Refreshers (£25); a couple of empty boxes of *Star Trek* Crackers (£75); and a box of Kellogg's Sugar Smacks from 1969, featuring Spock on the front (£30).

A 1969 bubblegum wrapper, once available for 3d, is now worth £25 and doesn't even contain gum anymore. Mr Heinrich also has 4,000 picture cards that used to come with the bubble gum worth about £5,000 in total, and original *Star Trek* artwork from the 1971 comic TV21 (£1,500). A full-size *Star Trek* pinball machine is worth only £850 and is considerably harder to transport.

There are two five-inch figures, of an Andorian and a Romulan, worth £900 the pair—considerably more than the signed photo of the Enterprise crew, or the signed copy of Michelle Nichols's autobiography *Beyond Uhura*, but not as much as a shirt that once belonged to Sulu, which Larry saw auctioned in America. "It went for £1,500," he says, "but only because it had an authentication letter from Dorothy Fontana, the associate producer. They are not that rare because shirts were changed every couple of episodes so there are a lot of them. A fully authenticated original phaser gun, however, if it was close-up quality rather than one made for extras, would be worth thousands."

A 1976 toy *Trekulator* calculator is worth £75; a Tricorder (the thing Spock uses for scanning new planets) £125; and the walkie-talkie more than £100—all objects which, in their true incarnations, are the stuff of which trekkers' dreams are made.

For a more down-to-earth start to a collection, however, you need look no further than Weetabix boxes currently on sale at your local grocer. "There are two cards in each 48-biscuit box and ten cards in all." Why, then, were there dozens of cereal packets piled on his desk? "Well, you never know which ones you are going to get; you could buy 50 boxes and still have only nine different cards. It can get quite expensive." Not quite enough, though, to cost you the shirt off Sulu's back.

Winston Churchill memorabilia is included in the T. Vennett-Smith of Nottingham's autograph sale on Wednesday. A signed sepia photograph of the wartime Prime Minister is £500 to £700, while an autograph is £350 to £450. The sale also includes a rare signed photograph of Glen Miller estimated at £100 to £200, but it is in poor condition.

A two-foot long Georgian signal cannon is valued at around £1,250 at Wallis & Wallis's auctions at Lewes, East Sussex, on Wednesday. Other attractions at this spring military sale are an Imperial Russian figured helmet (£7,000) and a cased Adams revolver (£1,350).

Collectors may pay slightly over the odds for the furniture, ceramics and works of art at the British Antique Dealers' Fair in London on Wednesday, but each item has been vetted for authenticity. Special events include wine tastings and masterclasses.

Bonhams in London becomes a showcase for British contemporary decorative art from Thursday at its fourth annual selling exhibition of recent work. The sale includes works by well-known names Ron Arad, Tom Dixon and Danny Lane (£1,950 to £5,338), as well as new names.

Mussolini's Alfa Romeo is for sale at Cops of Kensington on Thursday (£130,000 to £150,000), with the car's original log book.

Vincent Van Gogh's *Young Man With A Cap* is at Christie's New York's spring Impressionist sale on Thursday, the most important work by the artist to appear at auction since his *Portrait of Dr Gachet* fetched £49.7 million in 1990 and helped boost the lagging Impressionist market.

An estimated £10 million-worth of paintings by Picasso, Renoir and Matisse are to be offered by Parnis, Harrison, mother of Tony MP Winston Churchill.

T. Vennett-Smith, Grandstand Nottingham Racecourse, Colwick, Nottingham (Information 0115 9830541); Wallis & Wallis, West Street Auction Galleries, Lewes, Sussex (01273 892088); British Antique Dealers' Fair, Duple of York's Headquarters, King's Road, London SW3 (0171-589 6108); Bonhams, Montpelier Street, London SW7 (0171-303 3930); Cops of Kensington, sale at Chiswick House, London (0171-584 7444); Christie's New York, 302 Park Avenue, New York, (212 546 1119).

SARAH JANE CHECKLAND



THE TIMES READER OFFER VE-Day commemorative offer



WHEN Germany surrendered in the early hours of May 8 1945, a two-day public holiday was declared. People gathered in the streets to celebrate—and when night fell the flag-waving and singing continued around bonfires.

The Times was there to record the euphoria, and 50 years later, offers readers a unique commemoration of VE-Day and of the headline that captured Britain's mood. This miniature replica of a 1930s Chevrolet newspaper delivery van measures 3.5in long, and reproduces the headlines that appeared in The Times on May 8, 1945.

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IN THE EVENT OF A CUBBY FLAG TELEPHONE
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Trekkers' tips

Memorabilia '95 is at The NEC, Birmingham, today and tomorrow, from 10am-5pm. Adults £3; concessions £2. For further information telephone 01462 683965.

Time Trek: 46, High Street, Bromley, Kent, BR1 1EG (0181-313 0677).

The Star Trek Official UK Fan Club, PO Box 355, Bushey, Watford, WD2 2NA. The annual subscription costs £10.

Greenberg's Guide to Star Trek Collectables (Greenberg Publications, Sykesville, Maryland, 1990) is a three-volume A-Z guide to paraphernalia and costs £11.99 each for volumes I and II, and £13.95 for volume III. Available from sci-fi, comic, and film shops.



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When alarm bells ring for burglars

Timer switches and
rambling roses — a
guide to making
your home secure

Burglars in towns and cities are having a tougher time of it lately, partly because residents are increasingly security conscious. In rural areas, there are richer pickings. Yet, wherever you live, there can be no room for complacency about the safety of your home from intruders.

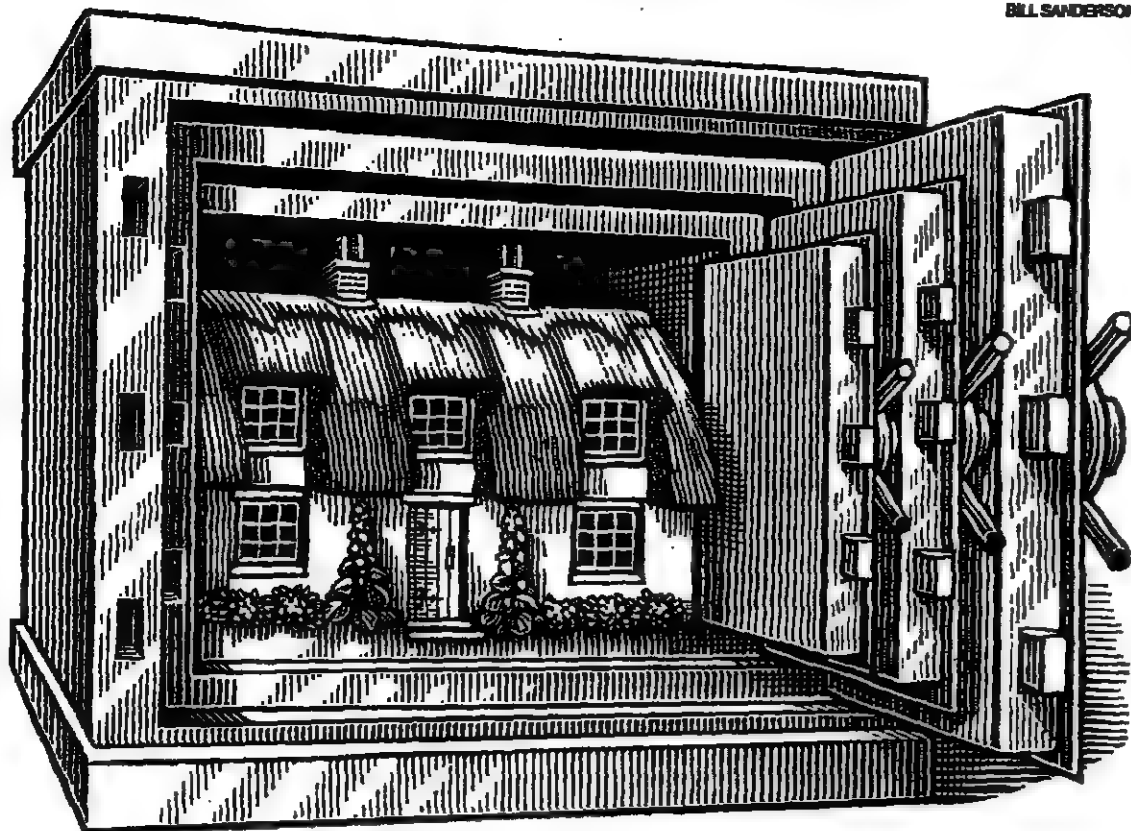
Start by consulting the Crime Prevention Officer at the local police station, who can visit your home and provide advice and leaflets (the Metropolitan Police offered me "Beat the Burglar" and "Your Practical Guide to Crime Prevention").

The first recommendation is that your house should be empty. Timer switches turn on lights, radios and even your dishwasher when you're out. Kingshead has a good range of plug-in timer switches, from the simple 24-hour unit to the seven-day timer, which offers up to 12 settings a day over a week (£14.99 and £20.99 from Texas). For centre lights, use the Polycell auto Light Sensor (£14.99 from Texas), which plugs into the light fitting and automatically switches the light on at dusk and off at dawn (they are not suitable for use with dimmer switches). You can also get the programmable Swiss autolight system from Homebase, which will draw your curtains. Rails cost from £31.49, motorised control unit £69.99, remote control £35.99.

Use infra-red exterior security lights as a deterrent, such as the water and vandal-proof Flash Guard 100W body-heat sensing passive infra-red outdoor lamp (£39.99 from Texas). These also alert you to the presence of intruders in the house when you are at home.

It is worth planting a thorny rambling rose or hedge around your boundaries to make intruders think twice about clambering into your garden — but make sure that the front of the house is still visible to passers-by so that a thief cannot work unseen. Houses with high hedges are an obvious target for burglars.

The police also recommend that you have photographs of your valuables. Remember to write the size and describe any distinguishing features



on the back of the picture. Use an etching tool to mark items with your postcode. Use an ultra-violet marking pen (Topline UV Property Marker, £1.49 from Texas) only when engraving would reduce the item's value, because the mark can fade.

DOORS

All external doors and frames should be strong, in good condition and of solid core construction, 44mm thick. If a burglar cannot break through a strong door with a good lock, he may try to break down a weak frame. A metal bar round the inside of the frame can prevent this.

Replace glass door panels with laminated glass. Fit five-lever mortice deadlocks to front and back doors (Chubb 3G114, £22.99 from Homebase). Consider, too, automatic deadlocks, which operate when the door is closed but, when locked from outside with a key, cannot be opened

- ☐ Banham 1017-622 5151
- ☐ British Security Association
- ☐ Free BT helpline, 0800
- ☐ Chubb A132494, Chubb 01902 455440
- ☐ Control Risk 017-222 1552
- ☐ Do It All, 0192
- ☐ ERA, 0192

from the inside, so preventing a thief who had entered through a window taking your possessions out through a door (Yale antiunlocking Dead Bolt P66B, £46.95 from Homebase). And, fit and use a door chain.

Check that the door hinges are sturdy and, for additional security, fit hinge bolts or plates to reinforce the hinge side of the door (Chubb Hinge Bolts WS14 pair £4.35, Kickstop Hinge Plates, pair from £13.25 from Homebase). If you have glazed doors, consider fitting laminated glass, which is harder to break.

Get specialist advice on fitting locks to patio doors and ensure that the locksmith you employ is a member of the Master Locksmiths Association. Banham will come to your house (if it is within a 70-mile radius of London) to offer advice, a free quotation and fit locks for you. The cost varies, depending on need.

WINDOWS

gap no bigger than a hand. So make sure that fanlights and

skylights are secure. Glue the slats of glazed windows in place with epoxy resin or, better still, replace them with fixed glass. Put a lock on every window — inexpensive locks for all types are available from DIY stores. For a wooden casement window, the consumer magazine *Which?* recommends a Cnabb 8K120 (£14.25

for two) or the 8KJ01 (£5.99). For metal casement windows, ERA snaplock 904 (£9). The *Which?* experts were able to force all the locks on test, but a show of security may at least deter the opportunist thief. It is essential to position the locks properly, and for this you will need advice.

GRILLES

The main argument against window grilles is that they may delay or prevent escape from fire. Banham offers made-to-measure diamond mesh hinged grilles to ease window cleaning and emergency exits (prices from £6.40 per square foot unfitted, minimum price £40 plus VAT). The grilles are stove enamelled for a durable finish, usually white, but colours are available at extra cost.

Aluminium security shutters are an alternative but can cost as much as £3,000 for a bay window. For details contact Nationwide Security Blinds (01929 554901) or Cordula (0161 969 4889).

BURGLAR ALARMS

Visible alarms may deter a potential burglar. Whatever type you choose, get specialist advice and several quotes. Ask your insurance company which systems and firms it recommends. Professionally installed alarms should meet BS4737. There are cheap DIY alarms on the market (which should meet BS6707) but make sure you know what you are doing before fitting them yourself — a badly fitted alarm can create as many problems as it solves. One recommended alarm is the RE 3000 (£289.95).

Which? tested alarms installed and maintained by companies including Chubb Alarms, Modern Security Systems and Telecom Security in November 1994 and, overall, were most impressed by the service offered by smaller local firms registered with NACOSS (the National Approved Council for Security Systems).

If you have intruder or fire alarms with automatic phone dialling facilities, check that your alarm company has modified its system to work with the new dialling codes. Unconcocted alarms will not work and your insurance could be invalidated.

A final thought: if you're thinking about fitting a burglar alarm, remember the recent police suggestion that penalties might be considered against owners of alarms which persistently go off for no reason.

STEPHANIE LEWIS



Leicestershire: 20 Barnsdale, Great Easton, near Market Harborough. Grade II listed thatched cottage with garden. Two bedrooms, bathroom, sitting/dining room, kitchen/breakfast room. Parking area. About £120,000 (Savills, 01780 66222)



LEICESTERSHIRE
20 Barnardale.



Hampshire:
30 The Borough,
Crandall. Period
end-of-terrace
cottage in the heart of
the village with rear
garden overlooking
open countryside. Two
bedrooms, bathroom,
reception room, kitchen
and pantry. Garage.
About £115,000 (John D.
W. 01323 725222)



Devon: Glebe House, Sampford Courtenay, Okehampton. Thatched cottage with one-bedroom annexe and rear garden. Four bedrooms, two reception rooms, kitchen and utility room. Garage. About £122,000 (GA Property Services, 01837 54251).



CHERYL TAYLOR

MANVILLE ROAD, SW17

On the Heaver Estate, a double-fronted Victorian house with considerable ground floor space and a beautiful 63ft x 36ft garden. 7 beds. 3 baths, 3 recepts. Kit, cloak, utility rm, cellar.

Freehold
£425,000

WANDSWORTH:
0161-871 3033


A black and white photograph of a large, double-fronted Victorian house. The house features a prominent chimney on the left side and a bay window on the right. The facade is made of brick or stone, and there are several windows of varying sizes. The house is set on a street, and a small garden or driveway is visible in the foreground.

WIMPOLE STREET, W1

With two grand reception rooms, an elegant and beautifully decorated maisonette on the 1st and 2nd floors of an elegant period house. 3 beds, 2 baths, shower rm, 2 receps, kit, cloak, lift.

**Lease to 2112
£575,000**

**MAYFAIR:
0171-408 0055**




CHRISTOPHER MEWS, WII

In a quiet backwater close to Holland Park, a modern, practical house with a roof garden and garage. 3 beds: 2 baths, shower rm, 3 recep. kit, utility rm, dkrm, k'ette, balconies.

Freehold
£335,000

KENSINGTON:
0171-727 0705



**ST JOHN'S
WOOD, NWS**

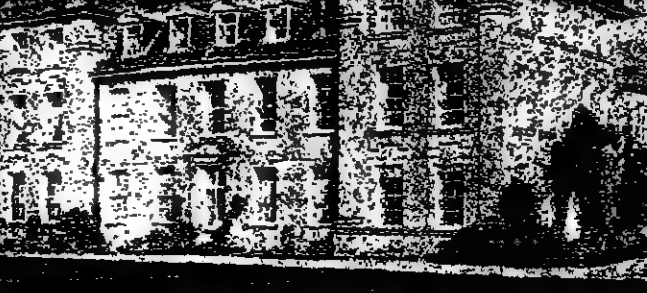
An unmodernised
Regency house, at
various times the
home of eminent
artists, 3 beds,
2 baths, 2BR studio
mezz with 12'6"
ceiling height, open
plan kit / dining rm,
utility rm, front
garden, rear patio,
parking.

**Freehold
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North London 0171-722 3336 Wimbledon & Surrey 0181-946 9487
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GLOUCESTERSHIRE - Near Cheltenham Price Guide: £175,000
An elegant first floor flat in an 18th century Grade II listed house. 2 double bedrooms, bathroom, en suite shower room, drawing room, kitchen/breakfast room. Garage, use of tennis court, swimming pool and gardens of about 6 acres.

CIRENCESTER: 01285 642244



HAMPSPHIRE
Oditham

A late Georgian house in a delightful & secluded setting next to commonland.

5 beds, 2 baths, 3 receps. kit, playrm. Garage, granary / summer house, further outbuildings, gardens, tennis ct, swimming pool.

About 2 acres.



Price Guide:
£495,000

FARNHAM:
01252 737115

HAMPSHIRE
Beaulieu.
A delightful house with a guest flat and southerly views over the Beaulieu River. 4 beds, 3 baths, 3 scoops, lift, conservatory. Flat with bed, bath, coop, kit. Garage, stone sheds, garden with private jetty onto the River. About 1/2 acre.

Price Guide:
£425,000


LXMININGTON:
01590 677233



CAMBS/LINCS
BOULDER
 A fine period house
 on the edge of the
 Fens, 27 miles from
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 Cross 37 mins).
 6 beds, 2 baths,
 shower rm, 3 receps,
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 domestic office,
 garage, further
 stabling, garden and
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 About 2.6 acrs.
 Price Guide:
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KENT
Speldhurst
 A delightful family house in attractive gardens & grounds.
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 b/fast rm, utility rm, garage,
 outbuildings, garden,
 tennis court, paddock
 and pond.
 About 2.5 acres.
Price Guide:
\$850,000

EA5T GRINSTEAD:
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CENTRAL ASIA: Follow one of the most romantic roads in the world, from Tashkent to Samarkand

Smooth passage on the old Silk Route

There's a new commodity being traded on the old Silk Route, especially the part that snakes its way, 500 miles or so, through Uzbekistan: tourism. Visitors are welcome, and trade is brisk, bringing smiles not just from those who directly benefit but from people in streets and markets everywhere.

Taking photographs in Tashkent's Ala-Ata Bazaar was problematical, and not only for the danger of running out of film at spice stalls piled high with yellow mustard mountains, black pepper, cayenne, paprika and vanilla. As I paused to snap a mound of pomegranates about the size and shape of the Great Pyramid, the top one was whisked off and handed to me with a

beaming smile that dazzled like a flash going off in my face. On its own this wasn't too bad, but as I meandered past the stalls filled with rainbows of spices and orchards of fruit, the lone pomegranate was quickly joined by other gifts: a bag of sweets, two plums, half a dozen tomatoes and a bunch of grapes. I therefore edged rather warily past the meat stalls, where sheep's heads and hooves were piled into trays, and rubbed my lucky sweets as I watched a troupe of acrobats walking on broken glass, and climbing ladders of swords in a square in the market centre.

The Uzbeks themselves probably feel they are climbing a ladder whose rungs are made of razor-sharp swords, as they emerge from the



protective, if restrictive, cloak of communism and try to establish themselves as a Central Asian nation. They do have one great advantage over neighbours such as Kazakhstan to the north and Tajikistan to the south, though: the world has heard of its great Silk Route cities of Tashkent, Bukhara, Khiva and, most golden of all, Samarkand.

It is names like these that will surely bring Western visitors more quickly to Uzbekistan than to the other Central Asian republics which broke free from Moscow in 1991 and now stand surrounded by Russia, China, Iran and Afghanistan. The Silk Route drove straight through Uzbekistan when it was first conceived more than 2,000 years ago, to take Chinese silk and spices to the

Roman Empire in exchange for gold and silver, textiles, glass and ceramics. Caravans of camels and laden elephants would plod across the Kizyl-Kum and Kara-Kum deserts of Uzbekistan, heading for Persia but stopping off at towns such as Bukhara and Samarkand.

We headed by coach down that same Silk Road, from the present capital, Tashkent, to Samarkand, the one-time capital of Tamerlane the Great, who was born nearby and is buried there in the Gur Emir mausoleum.

Some of our group of modern travellers reacted better than others to the difficulties of travelling in a new country, where facilities and food are not always what Westerners expect. The meat we were offered could well have been a Mongol horse, who could tell? When we arrived there were

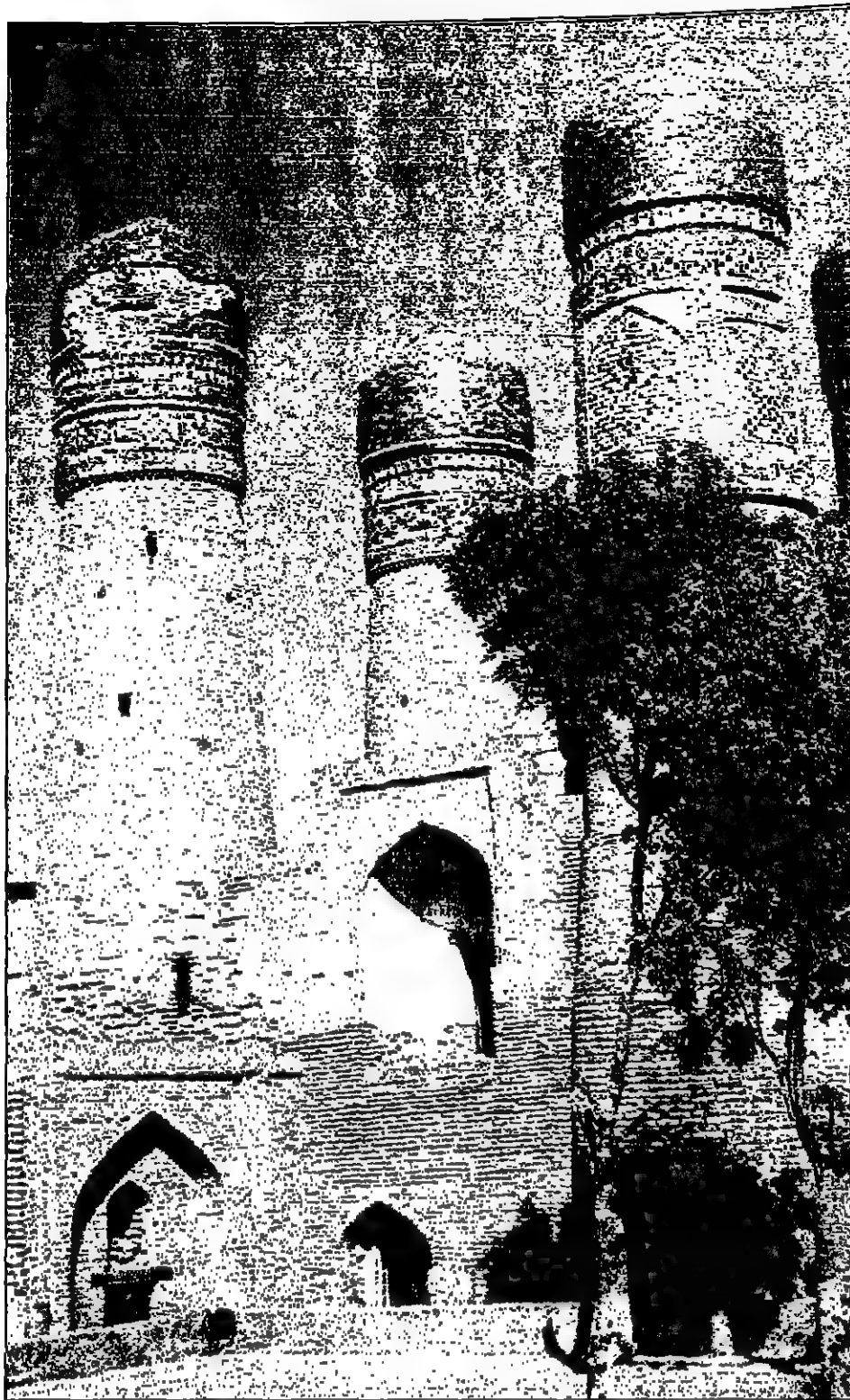
two vegetarians in our party; by the third day there were 11. However, the best meals came when traditional Uzbek food was served. You may not expect much from a national dish that is called *plov*, but when you learn that it is pronounced *pilav* and is tender mutton served on a bed of rice with almonds, yoghurt, raisins and spices, you forget the meatballs and cold chips of the previous night and tuck in, toasting your companions with vodka and amazingly tasty Uzbek champagne.

But a few poor meals and one grubby hotel can't take away any magic from the places themselves. We arrived in Samarkand in the late afternoon and a few of us strolled down to Registan Square, the first sight of which will stay with me forever.

even more than the Parthenon and the Pyramids, eclipsing even the natural beauty of moonlight on mountains. The golden sun of late September painted the madrasas (Islamic schools) that line three sides of this huge open square, over 100m across, the light glinting off the blue and turquoise tiles of the domes and minarets.

A mosaic of stars plays around the entrance portal of the 15th-century Ulug Bek madrasa, named after Tamerlane's gifted grandson, an astronomer whose observations and calculations were more accurate than those of Copernicus and Kepler. The remains of Ulug Bek's sextant and observatory were only discovered in 1908, on a hill overlooking Samarkand.

Facing Ulug Bek's madrasa is the Sher Dor ("lion-bearing") madrasa, from the early 17th century, named for the



The spectacular Charminar Madrasa in Bukhara, Uzbekistan, on the old Silk Route

vivid mosaic over its portico. On the third side of Registan is the Tilla Kari madrasa, the gilded madrasa, another 17th-century building whose Golden Mosque was restored in 1979 using 1,000kg of gold leaf. The scale is awesome, and the sight surpasses anything the name Samarkand might conjure up in the imagination.

Beyond Samarkand is Bukhara, on a smaller scale but where mosques and madrasas, mausoleums and bazaars, the citadel and street scenes all vie for attention. The town has an unhappier memory for the British, though, as this is the region of the "Great Game", the buffer zone between the Russians in the north and the British in India

to the south, both seeking to expand their empires into Central Asia. It was to Bukhara in 1939 that a Lieutenant-Colonel Stoddart came, seeking to strike an alliance with the Emir. Stoddart ignored the local advice that he must dismount as a gesture of respect before approaching the Emir's fortress, and as a result of this foolishness or arrogance he was thrown into the Bug Pit of the Zindan, Bukhara's prison.

After six months in the lightless company of scorpions and cockroaches, rats and lice, Stoddart was pardoned when he agreed to convert to Islam. He had the freedom of the city, but not the freedom to leave. Two years later a Captain Conolly arrived to rescue him, but both men were then thrown into the Bug Pit and later executed when Conolly refused to convert to Islam. To stare down into that same Bug Pit today is a chilling, choking experience.

We then drove through the desert to Khiva, near the border with Turkmenistan. Khiva is a self-contained miracle, a medieval-looking town of brown mud houses and slender minarets, where 5,000

people live inside the intact city walls, through whose gateways you pass into what seems another age. This is what the Silk Route cities looked like, and after visiting the bazaar, buying spices and shaking many hands, five of

Fact File

□ The author travelled as a guest of Intourist Travel (0171-538 5965/8600), whose trips to Uzbekistan run monthly to November 1995. Seven-day trips, which exclude Khiva, cost from £575; 11-day trips including Khiva start from £785; and 14-day trips which include an extension to northern India, start from £895.

□ Travellers should take small denomination dollar bills, as travellers' cheques and sterling cannot be exchanged, though the situation is slowly improving so check before travelling. Take sweets, pens and picture postcards as presents to give to children you meet on the trip. Carry a water bottle for the coach journeys: tap water is not safe to drink but bottled water is readily available. Take Diocalm and other medications, mosquito repellent, sun block, a bath plug, toilet paper and plenty of camera film.

us climbed steps up to a platform high above the Kunya Ark, the old citadel of the khans of Khiva, where we looked down into the courtyard of the harem, and across the brown-cubed roofs whose building-block jumble was broken only by the graceful curves of blue domes and the jutting towers of minarets. The oriental wall of Uzbek music vibrated up to us and we warmed ourselves in the hot sun for 30 minutes.

If not quite the actual end of the trip, it was the emotional climax. We went for a final silent walk round the platform, swallowing our feelings. When we eventually wrenched ourselves away from Khiva to the coach to Tashkent and then to London, it was like tearing a delicate piece of silk down the middle.

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WORD-WATCHING

Answers from page 27

YESTERFANG

(c) Something that was taken at some time in the past. For example, your days off owing your beloved's maidenhead, all the good seats in the dress circle, and the last bottle of proper champagne.

INTERBASTATION

(c) Conveying the sound of an unseemly form of multiple sexual congress, this is a useful word for disturbing maiden aunts. Especially since its actual meaning is "quitting".

BUNKUM

(b) Claptrap. Both words have acquired the modern meaning of nonsense. The original and specific sense of *bunkum* is a flashy but insincere political speech made for the purpose of impressing the voters. That is, any political speech ever made. The original spelling was *Buncombe*, and the original *bunkum* was spoken by Felix Walker, a backwoodsman from Buncombe, North Carolina, who insisted on dragging out the debate on the Missouri Question in the Sixteenth Congress on the grounds that the people of Buncombe expected a speech from him.

THELYPHTHORIC

(b) Something that corrupts and seduces women, from the Greek *thelys* a female creature + *phthorin* to destroy. It is difficult to imagine what could be so described.

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ATOL 3133

TRAVEL

21

CAMPING: John O'Leary heads for the Italian coast and finds that his children are in their element

Pegged down near Pisa

The last thing you need when you are getting away from it all on the coast of Tuscany is a neighbour who can imitate a mobile phone. The nagging suspicion that your boss is about to make an offer that cannot be refused is enough to make anyone choke on their pasta.

But unpredictability is something you have to take for granted on a camping holiday, even in the comparative luxury offered by the fixed-site operators that lure tens of thousands of Britons abroad each year. So much depends on the quality of the site and the pitch you are allocated.

The next tent is not far away, and sound travels a long way through canvas — as the parrot amply demonstrated. Our feathered friend, who soon became one of the attractions of the campsite, was at Cecina, south of Livorno, and near one of Italy's less inspiring stretches of coastline.

With three pre-teenage children, the surrounding scenery hardly matters, however. Like most of the facilities used by Sunsites and rival companies, Camping Montescudaio has so much to offer that it is difficult to persuade the younger members of the family to go anywhere. Even if, like my children, they don't go in for the multitude of organised activities, it is no easy matter to drag them away from the swimming pool, pizza-ria/disco, tennis court, ice-cream bar, games area, jogging trail and the rest.

In fact, Cecina is handily placed for exploring the much more attractive Tuscan countryside inland. Pisa is less than an hour away by car, Sienna is an easy day trip and Florence not much farther away.

The distance from Britain keeps the number of Anglo-Saxon visitors down. Many of Sunsites' other clients were Dutch, and most of the conventional campers were Italian, many apparently semi-permanent residents.

Most of those who had made the trip from the Channel ports had, like us, used Motorail. Though scandalously expensive for the indifferent level of service provided (an hour's queuing for breakfast and two hours late on arrival), the train still has the edge on a 900-mile drive with three children.

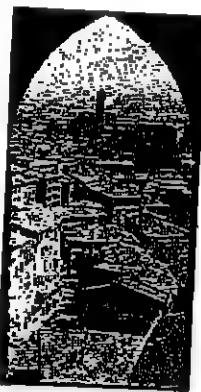
The growing number of firms in this field use many of the same sites and have much of the same equipment. Having tried three, there are far more similarities than differences. The tents are spacious enough for five (although pretty cosy with six) as long as the



Left: caravans cost more to hire than tents but they do come with creature comforts and their own shower and lavatory. St Tropez (above) is within easy reach of campsites at the ancient town of Fréjus

weather is good. With fridge, two-ring cooker and reasonably comfortable beds, they are as well equipped as the average holiday apartment, and most people spend virtually all of their time outside.

For real comfort, however, it is worth paying extra for a mobile home. At the height of summer, this means up to £300 more per party, but for that you get more living and sleeping space, creature comforts such as a fan and a gas fire and — most important of all — your own shower and lavatory. We split our holiday, as you can at no extra cost, between Cecina and Fréjus, on the French Riviera. On both sites, the lavatory blocks were immaculately clean and the showers always had hot water. But there can be queues at peak times for showers and wash basins, and there is no substitute for your own. The mobile homes take eight altogether, like the tents, they are



View of Sienna from a window

more comfortable below their notional capacity. The brochure insists that converting the dining table into a double bed is simplicity itself but even a party of six requires two people to sleep in the living area, and that can be disruptive enough if children are involved.

Moving between sites is a matter of taste. Obviously, you see more and you will not have to spend all your holiday on a site that has proved a disappointment. But, no matter how efficient you are at packing and unpacking the car, most moves take a day out of your holiday, and you can be left feeling you did not do a place justice.

We felt like that about Fréjus, an ancient and attractive town that is well placed for exploring both inland Provence and — if you can stand the traffic — the famous coastal spots. The spectacular Gorges du Verdon make a day

trip not to be missed, and St Tropez, Nice, Cannes and Monte Carlo are all within easy reach.

With three adults in our party (children under 14 go free) the basic cost of a two-

week holiday at the beginning of August was less than £1,000, although Motorail added practically £900 to that total. The real bargains are to be had at the end of August, when the basic cost is

halved. Even at the height of summer, however, Sunsites and their rivals provide value for money for families with children. The firm's 1995 brochure offers more than 60 sites in five countries. Some of the

most popular Mediterranean sites are now full for the peak weeks of the summer, but there are places left throughout the season in most other areas. There are also special offers in May, June and early

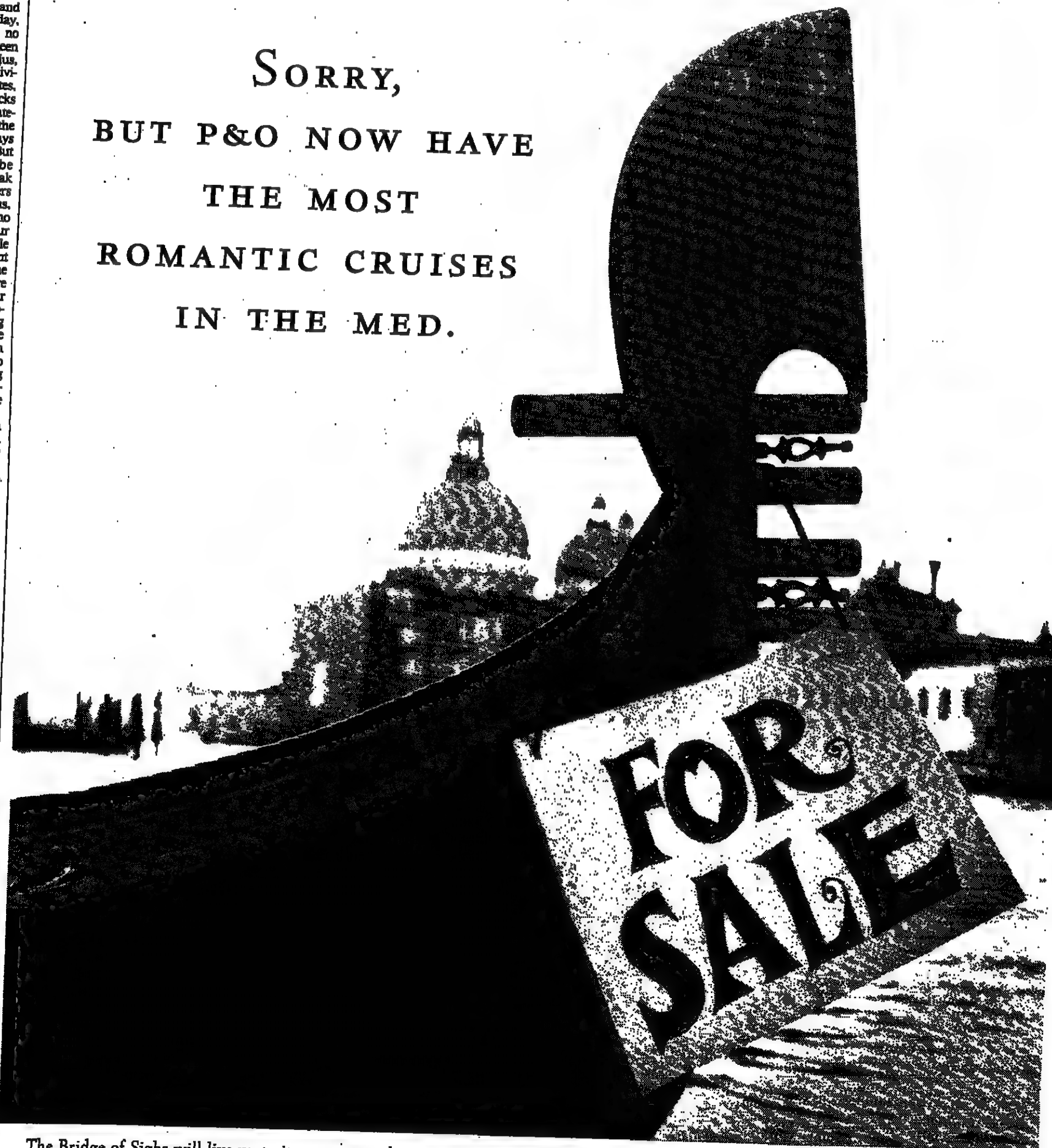
July, with a number of sites available for around £300 per family in a tent and £500 in a mobile home, both for a fortnight.

● The author and his family were the guests of Sunsites, Cecina

Court, Toff Road, Knutsford, Cheshire WA16 0NL (01565 625555). ● A comparable 12-night holiday at the beginning of August will cost just over £1,000 in a tent, or £1,500 in a mobile home, using the shortest ferry crossings.



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A mobile home for all the family

Happy campers

CAMPING FOR me last summer was a well-equipped mobile home which had the basics of civilised living for a middle-aged man, his wife, sister and their mother.

Our first view of La Sirène campsite at Argelès, south of Perpignan, was the unattractive high fence disguised by lush foliage. But it suggested why many parents choose camping: while they relax, their children can run and play freely.

The facilities at La Sirène are adequate: essentials included two bedrooms — one a good-sized double — a large lounge and kitchen, a flush lavatory and a shower. There are also swimming pools, tennis courts, crazy-golf, a BMX circuit, archery and organised games.

In the evening, the on-site

restaurant offers reasonably priced food. Being slightly too old to boogie to the over-loud music from the evening disco, we made our supper from freshly baked baguettes, apricots, peaches, fist-sized tomatoes and giant spring onions.

The great advantage of this kind of holiday is cost — it gets you to excellent holiday areas where hotel prices are prohibitive.

TIM JONES

● The author was a guest of Keycamp Holidays (0181-395 4000). May holidays are still available, from £229 (two adults and two children) in addition to peak-season August holidays, starting at £886 for two adults and up to four children. All prices are for a 12-night mobile-home holiday and are inclusive of return ferry crossings.

TRAVEL TIPS

□ For departures before May 20, Eurocamp (01565 626262) is offering a two-week holiday at Cassin, near St Tropez, for £218 for a family of two adults and up to four children.

□ Eurodrive (0181-342 9979) offers up to 40 per cent off midweek travel with Sienna Sealink.

□ French Country Camping (01923 261311) offers separate "adventure tents" sleeping two children (with air beds, compass, torch, and a campsite treasure map) for an extra £3.25

a night. A family of six will pay from £230 in May to £819 during peak season, including ferry crossing.

□ Canvas Holidays (0500 414444), which has the Hoopi Club for children aged from four to 13, has introduced summer deals offering savings of up to £298 at 100 campsites in seven European countries. For departures on May 13, a family of six get 14 nights for £149.

● For more holiday travel tips read Travel News in The Times every Thursday.

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TRAVEL

AUSTRALIA: Head for the hills around Sydney or explore the Great Barrier Reef

A silence that's out of the blue

I have a problem with Sydney, a problem that is probably shared by many: once there, I have no desire to wander. This is a shame because, within striking distance, there are attractions that would be irresistible if sited elsewhere.

To the north there are the Hunter Valley wineries, to the south the rustic Southern Highlands. For those who can break the spell of the city, however, the best option is to head west.

Even allowing for the Australian speed limits and the vigilance of the state constabulary, 90 minutes behind the wheel will take you from Harbour Bridge in downtown Sydney into the heart of the Blue Mountains, 3,000ft above the city. Moreover, it will take you into a different, more fragrant world, one to which the most slavishly gushing brochures can do no justice.

For a start, the mountains really do appear to be blue, holding the fascination as the silence and solitude spreads its cloak. You will not avoid the occasional coachload of tourists, Nikons at the ready, but such is the breadth and scope of an area conveniently ringed by good roads that they are easily shaken off.

Do not, however, neglect the tourist haunts. Katoomba, the main mountainside town, has a forgettable shabby centre but the scenic railway, which drops 800ft within 1,500ft, is unmissable. Leura is a captivating village, and at Govett's Leap, 15 minutes further down the highway, the stunning views are complemented by signposted cliff walks of anything between ten minutes and ten hours.

Sixty years ago, the Blue Mountains were to Sydney what Simla was to Calcutta.

"Come up and cool down" remains the summertime plea of the tourist board, and yet Sydney's population doggedly prefers the beach. It is in the winter, when log fires are lit in all the guest houses and the area adopts a very un-Australian magic, that the locals choose to visit.

Among the favourite haunts of visitors is Cleopatra, a Victorian house discovered a decade ago by the film-set designer Trish Mullene and the French chef Dany Chouet. While out walking on a Sunday afternoon, they saw a rundown property with a hopelessly overgrown garden. Tipped off that it was for sale, they made the purchase and then transformed it into what today is one of Australia's hidden treasures.

Unpretentious and unannounced by signposts, Cleopatra has five beguiling guest rooms — each bedecked with roses and lace but deliberately free of telephones — and a restaurant that brings gourmet from around the country. Most of all, it has all the atmosphere of escapism and romance.

Breakfast on the verandah on a clear, fresh morning, amid the sights and scents of an enchanting garden, with the only noise coming from the vividly coloured parakeets, convinced me I had no wish to return to Sydney. And that was quite some achievement.

ALAN LEE

● Cleopatra country guest house and restaurant, Blackheath, Blue Mountains, New South Wales (0061 47 879456). Prices from £76 to £115 per person per night, including dinner and breakfast. Return flights to Sydney from £742, flying with Qantas or BA, through Travelfinders (0171-538 3366), which can arrange car hire in Sydney from £35 per day with Avis.



The stunning Three Sisters Rock at Katoomba in the Blue Mountains is only 90 minutes' drive away from Sydney

Whale of a time for castaways

From the moon, the American Apollo astronauts reported that the Great Barrier Reef looked like a white scar on the face of the Pacific Ocean.

The reef runs for more than 2,000km from north of Brisbane towards New Guinea. It has 2,600 individual reefs and 300 coral islands, and at least one, Hayman Island, merits every superlative. If you are in search of paradise, here is a contender.

Hayman is a tiny castaway island of just 400 hectares, with a horseshoe-shaped hill in the centre rising to 250m, rocky outcrops, and a vegetation of mainly pine forest and grass trees. The island is uninhabited apart from the Hayman Island Resort, where the vine-covered buildings extend over

the entire southern coast. Hayman is the most northerly of 74 islands in Whitsunday Passage, which was discovered by Captain Cook on its namesake day in 1770 and is regarded as the finest sailing ground in Australia. It is also one of the closest to the reef itself. The nearest airport is at Hamilton Island, two hours by air from Cairns or Sydney. Then there is an hour-long ride on a launch.

The tastefully designed Hayman Island holiday resort has walk-to-wall contemporary Australian works of art, marble floors, and giant swimming pools that are tucked behind a coral strand of almost a dream-like quality. There are more than 200 terraced rooms, 11 penthouses and a saltwater lagoon winds through lush gardens set with statues, fountains and Grecian urns. The marina is filled with the resort's own yachts, dinghies and diving launches.

There are half a dozen unspoilt beaches, including the main resort beach, a coconut-trimmed crescent of pastel sand. When I pointed out five stingrays lurking in the shallows, the beach attendant just smiled: "Don't worry about them, and they won't worry about you."

Beyond the main beach is an 800m-wide coral reef, which is covered by water at high tide. Hayman is part of a marine park so the delicate pale pink and blue coral is a protected area. Other sheltered snorkel-

ling beaches on the island are Blue Pearl Bays 1 and 2. Arkhurst Island, just a few minutes off the southwest coast of Hayman, also has good snorkelling.

One evening I went whale watching, a daily event during July and August when humpbacks migrate along the reef to their breeding grounds. An hour out to sea we spied six of them swimming beside — and under — our boat.

It is also worth joining a day's scuba diving trip to Salt Reef to see baby sharks, stunning coral and magnificent shells. Those who have never dived before must take an introductory course at the hotel

before trying the real thing, but to snorkel you need no previous experience.

The resort's six restaurants provide a wide range of food, but the prices are high because visitors are virtually captive on this one-resort island. There is ample compensation in the sophisticated yet laid-back atmosphere, and a view to the sea through the palm trees from the breakfast table that is worth dying for.

FELICE EYSTON

Fact File

□ Felice Eyston was a guest of the Australian Tourism Commission (01793 707096, Queensland Tourist & Travel Corporation (0181-780 2227) and Qantas Airways (01345 747767).

□ Qantas has return flights from Heathrow to Sydney from £742, and flights from Sydney to Cairns from £120. Ansett Australia (0171-434 4071) has flights from Cairns to Hamilton Island and Hamilton Island to Sydney from £80 each.

□ The Observatory in Sydney, part of the Orient-Express Hotels group (0171-620 0003), costs from £170 per night; the Kewarra Beach Resort, Cairns (0061 70 576 666), costs from £78 per night; the Sheraton Mirage Resort, Port Douglas (0061 70 99 5858), costs from £180 per night.

□ Quicksilver Outer Barrier Reef Tours (0061 70 995 455) cost from £50 per day. Extra £12 for guided snorkel tour.

□ Stays at Hayman Island, bookable through The Leading Hotels of the World (0800 181 123), cost from £180 per night. Inclusive of breakfast, all non-motorised watersports and transfers.

World Offers.

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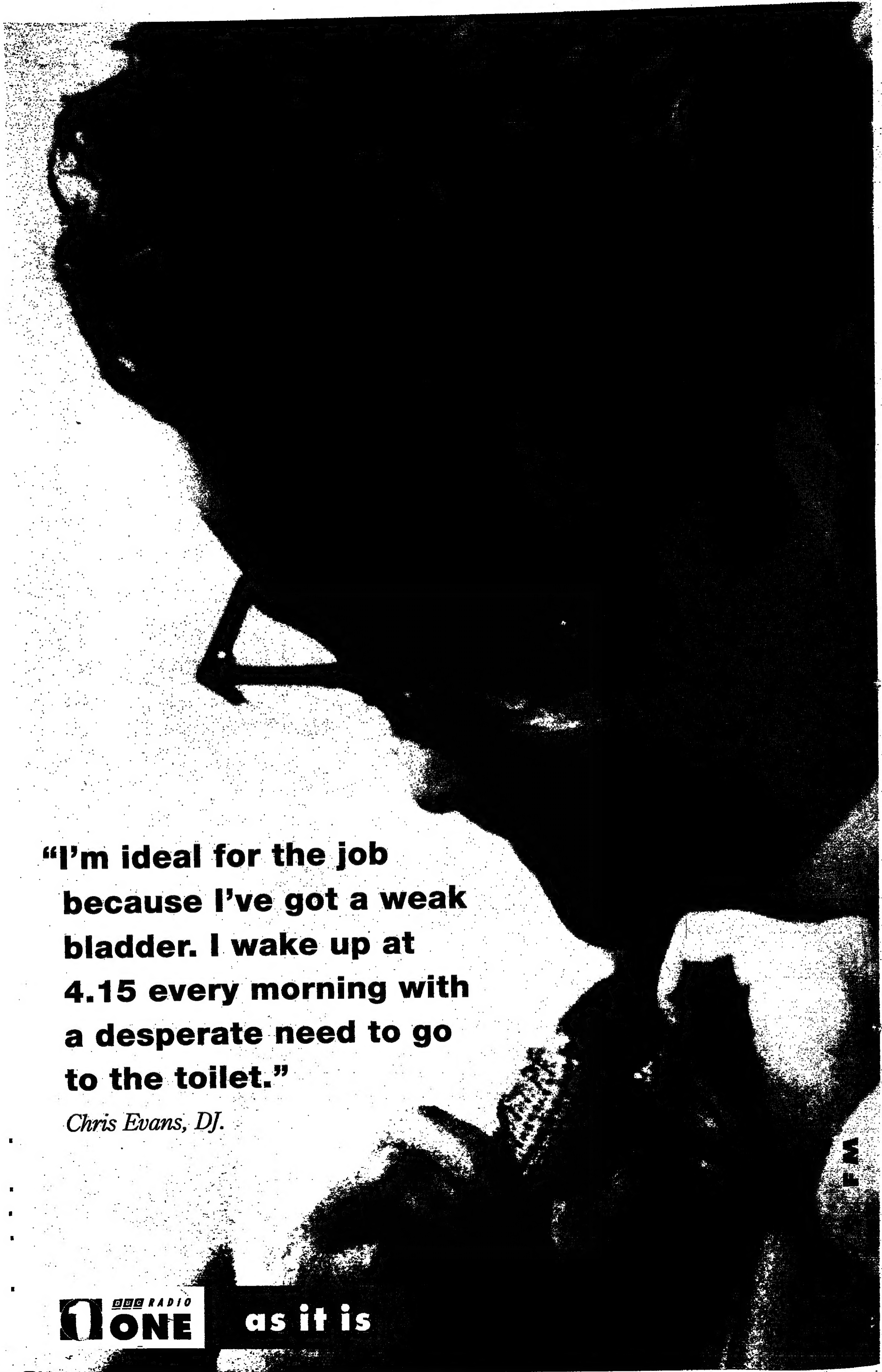
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